

27 DRESSES

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INT. BANQUET HALL -- NEW JERSEY -- 1986 -- DAY

It's 1986. A HAIR BAND earnestly croons Tears For Fears's "Shout" at a big, tacky New Jersey wedding.

JANE (V.O.)

Mozart composed his first sonata when he was just five years old. Claude Monet started painting when he was three, and Tiger Woods swung his first golf club well before his first birthday. I was five years old, at my cousin Trina's wedding -- the year was 1986...

We find HAL, 40s, and his two daughters, JANE, 5, and TESS, 3, sitting at a table, sadly sipping sodas. Hal pulls out a camera and takes their sad little picture.

TESS/JANE

Dad!!!

JANE (V.O.)

It was the first time we had gone out since my mother had died.

Tess tugs on her father's shirt.

TESS

Daddy, I have to go bathroom.

Hal looks around, anxious, unsure of what to do.

HAL

Okay, um, let me get someone to help you...or...maybe I can take you into the men's? Or...?

He's getting flustered, and a bit teary-eyed.

JANE (V.O.)

My mom had always taken care of everything. And now my dad was completely on his own.

Then little Jane steps up, acting very mature:

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Don't worry, Dad. I'll handle it.

HAL

(so relieved)

Oh, thank you, Jane...

Jane nods, no problem, then takes her sister's hand and guides her off.

INT. LADIES ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Jane waits outside of a stall, her hands clasped in front of her, looking considerably older than her age. Inside, little Tess sits on the toilet, her feet dangling.

TESS

I can't pee.

Jane frowns, thinks, then crosses to the sink and turns on the FAUCET.

JANE

Remember the Palumbo's swimming pool,
how warm the water was...?

Silence. Then TINKLING. Jane smiles, proud. Just then, the BRIDE, TRINA blows in. She is definitely from Jersey. Her poofy white dress is straight out of *Dynasty* -- and sports a HUGE RIP down the front. She looks in the mirror, sees the rip, and starts to cry hysterically.

TRINA

Shit! Shit shit shi--!

Then Trina sees little Jane. She freezes.

JANE

It's okay, Trina, we have cable.

Trina nods, right, and turns back to the mirror.

TRINA

Can you even believe this, Janie?! We
haven't even done the photos yet! *What*
am I going to do?

JANE

(patting her on the arm)
Don't worry, honey, we'll figure
something out.

Trina looks down at her, a little thrown by her poise.

TRINA

R-Really?

CLOSE-UP on Jane, deep in thought, staring at her shoes.

CLOSE-UP on Jane's feet. She is wearing shiny, white shoes with long, SATIN RIBBONS. Jane looks up at Trina. Eureka.

CUT TO:

THE WHITE SATIN BOW AT THE TOP OF THE WEDDING DRESS

tying the rip together. It looks great. Trina stands outside the bathroom now, just beaming.

TRINA

Oh my God, Janie, I can't believe you thought of that!

Holding her sewing implement, a fork, Jane shrugs modestly, it was nothing. Trina hugs her. Jane smiles, proud.

JANE (V.O.)

It was amazing. I was only five years old...

TRINA

You're a lifesaver!

JANE (V.O.)

...and I had already discovered my own little gift. Unfortunately, it was going to take me years later to realize...

Trina SHRIEKS as the GROOM scoops her up and laughingly carries off to the dance floor... Little Tess comes out of the bathroom, smiling. Jane takes a barrette out of her own hair and fixes Tess' hair with it.

JANE (cont'd)

That this particular talent...

Jane shuffles off, her hair in her eyes, and one shoe loose from having no bow. She almost falls on her face.

JANE (cont'd)

...might end up tripping me up a bit.

DISSOLVE TO:

ONE PAIR OF GROWN-UP LADIES SHOES. PAN UP TO REVEAL THREE BRIDESMAID DRESSES

lying on a bed next to a Filofax exploding with post-its, bookmarks, and lists. JANE, now a cute, smart, super-sweet woman in her 20s, whips around her New York studio apartment wearing only a white towel. It's present day.

She puts on heels and picks up a purse. Then, cringing, she takes the dresses from the bed and holds them up next to her, one by one. Her shoes and purse match them all.

JANE

(so relieved)

Oh, thank God.

EXT. MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY -- DAY

Jane paces on the steps of the Museum, holding a GARMENT BAG. We can't see what she's wearing. Then a cab squeals up and NANCY, 20s, Jane's best friend, stumbles out. She is wearing the ugliest bridesmaid dress ever -- shimmery blue-green satin with sequins that give the appearance of scales.

Nancy is still hammered from the night before, smoking a cig with about an inch of ash. Jane looks at her watch, unfazed.

JANE

Perfect. We're just going to make it.

NANCY

Do we have to? I look like the Loch Ness bridesmaid.

REVERSE to see JANE is wearing the same hideous dress.

NANCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Seriously, how bad does Suzanne not want us to get laid?

JANE

(smiling)

Lean back.

Jane whips some Visine out of her purse and, as Nancy leans back, drops some into her eyes.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Now let's see if we can't get you up these stairs without barfing.

Jane takes Nancy's arm and starts her up the stairs.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

What did you do last night?

NANCY

The usual. Drinking, carousing, tongue kissing strangers. You should try it sometime. Hey, do you have any--?

Jane is already taking a Tylenol bottle out of her purse.

JANE

Yeah, thought you might be a little green around the gills today.

NANCY

(pointing at her)

Funny. Hey, I don't suppose you--?

Yes, she does. Jane is already handing her a bottle of water. Nancy slugs back her pills as she stumbles up the stairs.

NANCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I'm not even kidding, Jane -- it seems like the only time we go out these days is for someone's wedding or bachelorette party.

JANE
I know. Lately, my idea of an intimate relationship is shoving dollar bills down some guy's fluorescent g-string.
(beat)
Now as for the hair...

Nancy's hair is messy in a butterfly clip.

NANCY
Bitch said "up." This is up.

JANE
I'll fix it inside.

Jane grabs Nancy's cigarette, flicks it away, then pops an Altoid into Nancy's mouth and ushers her inside.

INT. MUSEUM -- LATER

Jane stands with all the other aquatic BRIDESMAIDS, smiling, as the BRIDE and GROOM exchange their vows. REVEAL that they are all under the museum's famous giant whale...

FLASH!

INT. MUSEUM - LATER

The BRIDESMAIDS AND BRIDE are smiling as a photo is taken with them in front of a shark diorama. We unfreeze the picture and the bride, SUZANNE, turns to her bridesmaids.

SUZANNE
Do you guys like your dresses? And the best thing is, you can just shorten it and wear it again.

JANE
What a great idea!

The other bridesmaids just murmur in agreement.

INT. MUSEUM -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jane hurries through the crowd towards the exit. (Hurrying is the only speed Jane has.)

JANE
Pardon me...I'm sorry...

She anxiously glances down at her watch, and

CRASH!

She plows into someone.

She turns to see a handsome, unshaven, slightly alternative guy in a blazer, KEVIN -- who is now covered in scotch from head to toe.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Oh God, I'm so sorry!

Kevin starts shaking himself off. He still takes a moment to check Jane out.

KEVIN
No, I'm sorry -- have we met before?

JANE
No, I don't think...

Jane takes a napkin and starts wiping his jacket down. Kevin is just looking at her.

KEVIN
Because it's usually only women that I've slept with that end up throwing drinks at me.

Jane stops brushing him off.

JANE
(awkwardly)
Okay, inappropriate but still sorry.
Can I get you another--?

KEVIN
No, thanks. Wouldn't want to slow you down. You're clearly trying to make a break for it...

JANE
No, it's not like that, I have to...

Kevin leans over to her, but then says a little too loudly:

KEVIN
Go. Run. Save yourself!

She hurries off, rattled. Kevin watches her, intrigued...

EXT. MUSEUM -- EVENING

Jane hails a cab, her garment bag under her arm.

INT. TAXI

Jane starts disrobing. She's quickly down to her bra and underwear. She rips open the garment bag, pulls out a dress -- then sees the PAKISTANI TAXI DRIVER trying to sneak a peek.

JANE

Hey hey hey, eyes on the road, pal!
Eyes on the road!

EXT. STREET -- EVENING

Jane piles out of the taxi. She wears a different bridesmaid dress now, a long, hot pink sari covered in beads.

INT. FUNKY ARTISTS' LOFT -- EVENING

This is an ultra-hip wedding, filled with "Downtown" types. Jane poses for photos with the other BRIDESMAIDS, all in hot pink sari's. Everyone wears bindis including the bride, SHARI -- a Jewish girl in an Indian-influenced wedding dress.

SHARI

Don't you guys love your dresses?! And the best thing is, you can just shorten it and wear it again.

JANE

What a great idea!

The bridesmaids murmur in agreement.

INT. TAXI -- LATER

Back in the cab, Jane quickly changes into a huge parachute dress. She glances up -- and sees the same PAKISTANI TAXI DRIVER from earlier sneaking a peek at her.

JANE

You again?! How many times do I have to tell you, man? Eyes on the road!

EXT. CENTRAL PARK BOATHOUSE -- EVENING

It's a "Venice-themed" wedding. Another group of BRIDESMAIDS are standing on the Boathouse pier wearing high-collared Italian Renaissance dresses. The Bride is wearing a sexy "Italian wench" dress, and they are all about to be helped into the gondolas that are waiting for them on the pond. The groom and groomsmen are all waiting out on the lake in their gondolas, as the guests are congregating on the pier.

Jane slides in just in time. As the bride, COURTNEY, is helped into the gondola...

COURTNEY
--and the best thing is you can just shorten it....

JANE
And wear it again -- what a great idea!

The bridesmaids murmur in agreement.

INT. MUSEUM -- LATER

Jane runs out of the ladies room, her aqua dress half undone, looking at her Filofax to make sure she hasn't forgotten anything. Nancy falls in with her, suspicious:

NANCY
I knew it!

JANE
What?

NANCY
(re: Jane's open dress)
Either you were just getting freaky in the john, or you were at that other wedding.

JANE
(beat, conceding)
I...I didn't want to let the other brides down.

NANCY
Brides? You've been to two other weddings? Jane! Are you insane?

JANE
No, I'm a bridesmaid. Insanity has a lot less outfits. Zip me up.

Nancy does as they hurry back towards the reception.

NANCY
Are you actually pulling it off?

JANE
There was a brief scare with a big gust of wind and a very cheap gondola, but besides that, it's all going according to schedule.

QUICK CUTS:

INT. MUSEUM WEDDING -- NIGHT

The reception is in full swing. Jane and the other bridesmaids are dancing to "YMCA," miming the letters.

SONG

"It's fun to stay at the..."

As the song ends, Frank Sinatra comes on. Suddenly, all the BRIDESMAIDS' DATES come on the dance floor for a slow dance. Jane is left standing there, dateless. She slowly backs off the dance floor, trying not to look pathetic...

INT. FUNKY ARTISTS' LOFT WEDDING -- NIGHT

Jane in hot pink dances to "YMCA" with a little Indian boy. The dance floor is packed; everyone mimes the letters.

SONG

"It's fun to stay at the..."

The song ends and a Tony Bennett song comes on. Everyone couples off. The little INDIAN BOY presses up against Jane. She gently peels him off and backs off the floor...

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEDDING -- NIGHT

The wedding is now inside the Boathouse. Jane dances with a MINISTER to "YMCA." He energetically mimes the letters. Another Sinatra song comes on. The minister looks hopeful. Jane excuses herself, a little disturbed...

As she walks away, she notices KEVIN DOYLE, alone at the bar. He does a double-take -- what's she doing here? He toasts his scotch glass at her, intrigued. She immediately turns away and speed-walks out.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Jane sprints down the street in her aqua-dress. She blows past a JOGGER. Then she jogs in place, letting him catch up.

JANE

Can you zip me up?

INT. MUSEUM -- NIGHT

Jane staggers back in, catching her breath.

VOICE ON MIKE

All the single ladies, it's time for the throwing of the bouquet!

Jane looks like she's about to cry as she falls in with the single women. The bride tosses the bouquet. The 13-YEAR OLD GIRL right next to Jane catches it. She waves to her mommy:

GIRL

Look mommy! I caught it! And all the other ladies are so much older than me!

Jane and a few other ladies scowl at her.

OTHER LADY

Smug little shit, ain't she?

INT. LOFT WEDDING -- NIGHT

Jane staggers back in, tired, bindi askew, just in time for the bouquet toss. It sails right through her arms.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEDDING -- NIGHT

Jane staggers in, again in time for the bouquet toss.

Then Jane sees KEVIN DOYLE again, feet up, eating cake, watching her, amused. He toasts his cake, hello again!

Jane quickly looks away -- just in time to see the bouquet nail her in the face. Everyone laughs. Reddening, Jane picks up the bouquet, sheepishly waves to the crowd.

Behind her, the band mercifully starts into "New York, New York," and the dance floor fills up with couples. Jane gives the bouquet to a little girl, and then--

VOICE

I know why I'm at two weddings in one night, but what bet did you lose?

Jane turns to see KEVIN standing behind her, smiling, eating cake off his plate.

JANE

I agreed to be both their bridesmaids, then the dates got switched around.

KEVIN

Why didn't you just ask one of them to pick a different day?

JANE

(appalled)

Um -- because it's not a lunch date. The whole point of being a bridesmaid is to take care of the bride -- not to ask her if she can "reschedule."

KEVIN

(eating, shrugging)

Plus: two birds, one stone, right?

JANE
(growing more annoyed)
Actually, no, I happen to love
weddings.

KEVIN
That'll wear off. You're young.
Weddings are still happy occasions, the
buffet, the flowergirls, the crying
dads. Yeah. Trust me, pretty soon these
things'll make you want to shoot
yourself.

Jane looks disgusted. On the dance floor, the BRIDE and GROOM
start doing a very dorky electric slide.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I mean, look at these poor bastards.

JANE
(growing angry)
I think they look incredibly happy.

KEVIN
Only because they have no idea how
doomed they are.

JANE
How dare you?! This is their wedding!

KEVIN
Oh, come on, do the math. Right out of
the gate, 50% of marriages fail, right?
Add in she's Jewish and he's Irish
Catholic, he's blue collar Jersey and
she's spoiled Scarsdale, she's clearly
no panther in the bedroom and he's
definitely paid for sex more than
twice? Yeah, we're looking at a 4%
chance of a sustained marriage, tops.

Jane is utterly appalled.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Look, I'm just pointing out the
hypocrisy of it all...

JANE
How noble. Do you also go around
telling little kids there's no Santa
Claus? Cause someone's gotta blow that
shit wide open.

Kevin laughs. Jane doesn't.

KEVIN

Are you saying that believing in marriage is like believing in Santa Claus?

Jane reddens, angry, hating that he's smart.

JANE

No. No. I'm saying that marriage, like everything else good and important, is never easy. Cynicism, on the other hand, always is.

He nods, touché, just as BOBBY, a gay waiter, comes over.

BOBBY

Hey Jane, you need anything before we close the bar?

JANE

No thanks, Bobby, I'm fine.

BOBBY

Well, if you need me, I'll be over there watching the old ladies fight over the centerpieces. It's the best show in town!

Jane smiles as Bobby leaves.

KEVIN

The waiters know you by name?

JANE

(frowning at watch)

I have a wedding to get back to. It was really...uncomfortable meeting you.

Jane forces a smile and quickly grabs her bag off a table.

KEVIN

So am I going to get your phone number or what?

(off her look)

Kidding! I'm kidding! Have fun at the other one.

Kevin smiles, toasts his glass, and watches Jane hurry off.

AT THE DOOR

The bride, COURTNEY, stops Jane, looking very appreciative.

COURTNEY

Jane! Thank you for all your help. It really meant so much to me.

Jane smiles, happy.

JANE
Courtney, it was a pleasure, really.

COURTNEY
I cannot believe someone hasn't snapped
you up yet. Soon though, I can feel it!

She hugs Jane tightly, heartfelt.

BACK TO KEVIN

He watches the bride hug Jane, truly grateful, and his smile
turns more pensive, more impressed...

Then he looks down and notices that Jane left her FILOFAX on
the table. He grabs it, and looks back up-- but Jane is gone.

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT WEDDING -- NIGHT

Jane is being thanked by SHARI. She hugs Jane, heartfelt.

SHARI
I cannot believe someone hasn't snapped
you up yet. Soon though, I can feel it!

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM WEDDING -- NIGHT

Jane is being hugged by SUZANNE. Again, sincere.

SUZANNE
I cannot believe someone hasn't snapped
you up yet. Soon though, I can feel it!

Jane forces a weak smile. Yeah.

CUT TO:

EXT. MUSEUM -- NIGHT

GUESTS pour out of the hotel like it was Noah's Ark, everyone
in pairs. Except for Jane. She says her goodbyes.

And then NANCY stumbles out, drunk, arm around an USHER.

NANCY
You did it! Jane, you're amazing!

She hugs Jane as if she's just come home from war.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 (to usher)
 Jane is amazing. You don't even know.
 YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW!

The usher looks like o-okay? Nancy kisses Jane on the cheek.

NANCY (CONT'D)
 You're the best friend a girl could
 ever have. Text me tomorrow.

Nancy stumbles off, draped on the usher. Jane smiles sadly.

A cab pulls up. She looks inside. It's the PAKISTANI TAXI
 DRIVER from before, grinning at her. She sighs.

JANE
 Hey, Yamir. How's it going?

INT. CAB -- NIGHT

Jane sits in the back, exhausted. She rubs her feet.

YAMIR
 And the weddings, they were lovely?

JANE
 Yes, all the weddings were lovely and
 all the brides were gorgeous.

YAMIR
 What your favorite part?

Jane considers for a second...

JANE
 I think my favorite part is when the
 bride first enters. Everyone looks at
 her, but I always look back at the
 groom. Because his face says it all.
 The bride's just trying not to trip or
 have double chins or look at her
 stepmom, you know? But the groom's
 face...the pure love there...that's the
 money shot. That's why I go.

YAMIR
 My favorite part is when they kill
 goat.

JANE
 (beat)
 You're kidding, right?

Yamir grins.

YAMIR

Actually, my favorite part is when cute American girl change clothes in cab.

JANE

First of all, Yamir, you're a very sick man. Second, thanks for calling me cute..

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JANE'S BUILDING -- THE NEXT MORNING

Sweating, Jane returns from a jog the next day to find the SUNDAY NEW YORK TIMES in front of her door.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Jane leafs through the New York Times sections...

JANE

Death...Destruction...Sports: A-ha.

She pulls out the SUNDAY STYLES section and happily flips to the Vows page. As she stretches on her sunny floor, she starts happily reading the wedding announcements...

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE -- THE NEXT MORNING

Jane hurries off the elevator at work and starts rooting around the reception/mailbox area, a little frantic.

DAWN

Jane! Hey, you were right! The reception hall is totally willing to make our wedding cake in the shape of an electric bass. Killer idea!

JANE

I knew they'd go the extra mile for you and Crash-- listen: has anyone found my datebook?

Dawn shakes her head, sorry, nope. Jane continues looking.

JANE (CONT'D)

Dammit. That book is my life...

DAWN

And thanks again for being one of my bridesmaids. I'll totally hit you back when you find your Mr. Right.

JANE

That's a sweet thought, Dawn.

DAWN

I can feel it, Jane. Any day now the guy of your dreams is just going to appear, out of the abyss...

Just then, GEORGE SCANLON, 40's, Jane's very handsome, very clean cut, very boy scout-ish boss, steps from his office, looking perfect in a well-cut suit. She looks up.

DAWN (CONT'D)

...I just know it.

And, by the look on Jane's face, the man of her dreams has just appeared. Then his dog, GATSBY, bounds out of his office and over to Jane. He slobbers all over her. She loves it.

JANE

Hey, Gatsby!

GEORGE

Gatsby, don't be nice to her. She's 21 seconds late for work -- and I was terrified she left us for good.

Jane grins, smitten.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Do you know where the Brighton Beach footage is? I've looked everywhere--

JANE

Behind the door, bottom shelf.

He disappears. Reappears holding a videotape.

GEORGE

Jane, I love you. Gatsby, resume licking her! Throw in a couple for me!

Jane smiles as Gatsby licks her face.

INT. OFFICE -- LATER

George types away at his desk. Jane hurries in.

JANE

Producers meeting starts now.

George hops up, fumbling about. Jane hands him his jacket, notebook, and a pen. He freezes, exactly what he wanted.

JANE (CONT'D)

I know. It amazes me too.

He grins and they bustle down the hall together.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Oh, we're all taking Dawn out tonight
for her engagement.

GEORGE
Ooo, actually, I was going to--

JANE
No, this one night, you're not working
late. Seriously: workaholism went out
with the internet bubble, George. Play
is the new Work.

Laughing, he concedes, fine, I'll go. She smiles, good.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Also, Burk at the DA's said he'd meet
with you on the Minkov thing.

GEORGE
Great. I have a goon that can hook me
up with Minkov's former captain, too.

JANE
I read a blog speculating that Minkov
isn't even dead.

GEORGE
Is that what I pay you for now? Reading
blogs?

JANE
That, and sheltering you from
inconvenience, misfortune, or anything
negative that might befall you.

GEORGE
Oh. Right.

He flashes her a WIDE SMILE as he enters a conference room.
Jane melts, then pulls herself together and follows him in...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

All the reporters and producers of 7 Days, sit, waiting for a
meeting to begin. The staff is largely male. Jane and George
enter.

Then RICHARD NEIL, the highly sarcastic, highly bitter
executive producer, enters. He nods at a board with cards
listing each segment for upcoming shows, and asks quietly:

RICHARD NEIL
Who's got something for me today?

George starts in immediately.

GEORGE
I'm looking into the cluster of murders
in Brooklyn since Minkov was taken out.

Richard stops, considering it. Jane hesitantly follows up:

JANE
We've got three mob informants, we've
got the D.A., we've got the mayor,
we've got footage of the Guskin murder--

RICHARD NEIL
I'm charmed.

Jane smiles, great! Richard smirks at George.

RICHARD NEIL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Not so much by your story, George, but
because your assistant thinks I care
about what she has to say. Adorable.

Jane reddens, totally humiliated.

CUT TO:

INT. COPY ROOM -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jane and Nancy talk while Jane xeroxes a newspaper article.

NANCY
"We've got the D.A.? We've got the
mayor?" Jane, you got the D.A., you got
the mayor -- and you're the one who
should be producing that story.

JANE
Come on, Richard just burned me for
opening my mouth -- I don't even want
to think about what he'd do if I asked
to produce.

Nancy concedes, fair enough. Jane staples pages together.

NANCY
So: Fred told me you never called him--

JANE
Really? We can't skip the nagging part
of the day? Just this once?

Beat. Then Nancy shakes her head, yeah, no.

JANE (CONT'D)
Look, I wanted to call him, I just...I
lost my organizer.

Nancy looks at her: bullshit. Busted, Jane hurries out.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Jane sticks copies of the article in an envelope.

NANCY
This is the third guy you've blown off
in a month, Jane. What's going on--?

Just then they cross paths with George, Gatsby in tow.

GEORGE
Jane, will you remember to get Gil's
footage tomorrow? Bloodier the better.

JANE
Gil, gore. Got it.

GEORGE
And as for this party tomorrow night --
do I have to bring a gift?

JANE
You got her a set of champagne glasses
and a bottle of Cristal.

GEORGE
All wrong. I would never buy anyone
something that thoughtful.

JANE
I'll wrap it like a car ran over it a
couple times.

GEORGE
(grinning)
Finally, a woman who gets me.

Jane smiles as he walks away. Only she gazes at him a little
too long. Nancy sees this -- and literally shoves Jane into

AN EMPTY CONFERENCE ROOM

NANCY
I can't believe I didn't figure this
out sooner!

JANE
What?

NANCY
You're totally in love with George.

JANE
I am not.

NANCY
Are too.

JANE
Am not.

NANCY
Are too.

JANE
I don't like where this is going.

NANCY
You are! That's why you blow off all these great guys! That's why you're always single! *And that's why you stay being his assistant! You love George!*

JANE
Come on, Nancy, he's my boss.

NANCY
Right, because in the history of work, no assistant has ever ended up with their boss.

JANE
Look. Maybe...I have some, you know, vague professional affection for him...

NANCY
If by "vague professional affection" you mean you want to rub your naked body against his, vigorously and often, I thank you for your honesty.

JANE
That's not what I meant.

NANCY
Oh please, he obviously adores you. Now we just have to find a way to upgrade your cutesy work banter into muffled sex in the supply closet.

JANE
Nancy!

NANCY
What? It's really fun.

Jane powers out of the room; Nancy doggedly follows.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

NANCY

Fine, if you're going to hide from true love, then do us all a favor and get yourself properly laid. Some of the guys from the wedding are driving in from the Island. Come out with us.

Jane raises an eyebrow, impressed. Nancy shrugs, faux modest.

NANCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Yeah, once I've Electric Slid with a guy, they're pretty much putty in my hand. Just come. They'll buy us flirtinis. It'll be stupid.

JANE

Can't. I'm picking Tess up at the airport and bringing her to see my Dad.

NANCY

Gosh, if only there was a service that would pick people up at the airport. They could drive little yellow cars and-

JANE

I offered to pick her up, Nance.

NANCY

So how is Princess Tess?

JANE

Don't start. My sister's great. I can't wait to see her.

Suddenly Jane stops in her tracks. On her desk is a BOUQUET of flowers. They both exchange a look.

NANCY

Who are they from?!

JANE

(checking for a card)

No note...

They exchange an excited look...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AIRPORT GATE -- NIGHT

PASSENGERS begin flowing from the jetway. Jane is standing among the limousine drivers who all hold signs with people's names on them. Jane's sign reads: BEE-ATCH.

Suddenly a large Vuitton rolling suitcase jostles its way out the gate, pushing people aside, followed by...

TESS, Jane's younger sister who we met in the opening. She has grown into a tall, gorgeous, fun-loving fashionista.

She lets out a yell when she sees Jane and runs to her (she's the kind of woman who can run in stiletto boots). She starts laughing when she sees the sign.

TESS

Bee-atch!

They hug. Jane instinctively picks up Tess's bags. Tess instinctively lets her.

INT. VOLVO -- DAY

Jane steers her ancient Volvo station wagon out of the parking garage.

TESS

Good to know Dad's car still has that smell.

JANE

You mean cheetohs and Aramis? Yeah, I think he gets that at the car wash.

Tess laughs, puts her feet up on the dash.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

So what's going on? Who are you seeing these days?

TESS

Me? No one. I've decided to focus on other areas of my life right now.

JANE

(thrown)

Really? Like...like what other areas?

TESS

You know. Work. And...other things. Like reading. I read sometimes. Why should I spend all my energy chasing guys, right?

JANE
 (stunned)
 Because you're Tess. That's what you
 do.

TESS
 Well, not anymore! It's just you and me
 now, be-atch!

Just then Tears for Fears's "Shout" comes on the radio. Both sisters look at each other: oh shit! They crank it up and start car dancing, arms flying about, laughing...

EXT. HARDWARE STORE, NEW JERSEY

Tess and Jane walk out of the Volvo. There is a large hardware store in front of them called "Hal's Hardware". Their father HAL, 60's, is waiting outside for them. He's older, but still just as emotional -- and just as dapper -- as when we first met him.

HAL
 (to Tess)
 Look at you! Look at you!

TESS
 (hugging her father)
 Daddy!

They walk into the store.

INT. HARDWARE STORE, NEW JERSEY

It's your typical, old hardware store, complete with dusty cans of paint, nails, ladders and such. It looks like nothing's changed in the twenty-plus years Hal's had it.

The three of them are walking through the store. Tess looks around.

TESS
 (playfully sarcastic)
 Wow, Dad, I love what you've done with
 the place.

JANE
 Hey -- if he didn't succumb to the
 pressure of renovating in the 80s and
 the 90s, why should the "Ohs" be any
 different?

HAL
 Listen you two -- people can get
 everything they need here, and that's
 what matters.

A young couple walks up to Hal.

YOUNG WIFE
Excuse me, do you sell sconces?

HAL
Not a chance in hell.

The couple walks away, disappointed. Jane and Tess just stare at him.

HAL (cont'd)
What?

They keep walking through the store.

HAL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
So is my fashionable daughter sure she can only stay a week?

TESS
Yeah, I have to get back to help Roberto with a huge fashion shoot. Italian Vogue. He's been designing up a storm for it.

HAL
Listen to her talking about her busy career. And in Milan no less.

They are now by the register. We see that there are a few photos up around, of Hal and Tess and Jane's MOTHER, including one of her and Hal on their wedding day.

HAL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Your mother would've been so proud of you, Tess.
(quickly)
And of you, too, Janie. Both of you.

Hal is about to get teary. Jane and Tess exchange a smile.

JANE/TESS
Dad!

HAL
Ah! You girls.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Tess follows Jane into her apartment.

TESS
You sure you don't mind me staying here for a whole week?

JANE

Stop it, I love that you're here.

The first picture on the wall is a glamorous shot of Tess, her long hair flowing, her chin upraised.

TESS

Oh god, you like that picture? I look like a golden retriever.

JANE

Are you kidding? You look beautiful.

Tess smiles, clearly enjoying the compliment, and spots another picture. It's the one from their father's house of their mother, looking gorgeous in an empire waist wedding gown. But this time it's in the New York Times, a clipping from the Vows column from thirty years ago.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I've always wanted to have a wedding just like theirs. Tavern on the Green, the big band, the ceremony at sunset...

TESS

God, you sound like Dad. "Her society parents didn't approve, but she married me anyhows--"

JANE

(also imitating father)

"--a poor shlep from Long Island."

They both laugh. Then look at their parents' photo.

JANE (cont'd)

(sadly)

The entire world stopped for him when mom died.

TESS

I know. Can you imagine ever being that much in love?

Jane smiles with more than a little longing...

Then Tess notices the stack of New York Times Vows sections on the sideboard, picks one up.

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Hold the phone-- what are all these?

JANE

Nothing...they're...

Tess picks up another one, and another. They're all written by MALCOLM DOYLE.

TESS
You collect...wedding announcements?

JANE
(a little embarrassed)
No! O-Only the good ones. I just like the stories, you know, how people met, the lengths they went to stay together, the crazy proposals--

TESS
These are all written by the same guy.

JANE
Yeah, Malcolm Doyle. His are the best. Funny and dry and just a little sweet.

TESS
So, um, do you guys have like conventions and stuff?

JANE
No! I'm not a Trekkie! I just like the Vows section. It's, you know, it's the only happy part of the paper...

TESS
Right. Well. Don't worry, your geek-ret is safe with me.

JANE
Geek-ret, that's funny.

Jane looks at her watch -- shit -- and hurries into the bathroom, starts getting ready for the night.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Hey, wanna come out with me tonight? I've got a party with some work people.

TESS
That's so sweet, but I have some friends in from Milan for one night, they want to hit the clubs hard.

JANE
(feigning confusion)
You'd rather go clubbing with Italian models than hang out with your sister's work friends? Are you feeling okay?

Tess grins and steps into the kitchenette, starts looking through the cabinets.

TESS
If Giovanni's crew craps out early,
though, I'll try to stop by.

Without seeing her, Jane knows what she wants:

JANE
Vodka's already in the freezer.

Tess shakes her head, she's good. But where's the--?

JANE (CONT'D)
And Red Bull's above the fridge.

TESS
(faux serious)
I love you, Jane. Now more than ever.

JANE
(laughing)
Love you too, Tessie.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- LOBBY -- LATER THAT EVENING

Jane hurries out of her elevator, looking at her watch (as always). She startles upon seeing KEVIN talking to her DOORMAN. Jane gathers herself and approaches, cold.

JANE
What are you doing here?

KEVIN
Oh, hey -- I'm just returning this.

He hands Jane HER MASSIVE FILOFAX; her sour mood reverses.

JANE
Oh my God! Thank you so much! I've been
looking for this everywhere.

KEVIN
(re: its weight)
You know, they have these space-age
gizmos called PDA's now--

JANE
Yeah, no, I like my big book.
(softening, sweet)
But thank you. Maybe...maybe I
underestimated you...

KEVIN
Oh, I doubt it. But you're welcome...

They share a smile... It's a nice moment.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

So: did you really go to all those weddings?

All of Jane's goodwill goes right out the window; she clutches her Filofax protectively to her chest, outraged:

JANE

You read it?!

KEVIN

(confused)

Of course I read it!

Jane gasps, then hurries past him to the curb and furiously starts trying to hail a cab; Kevin follows.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Really, how do you stand going to all those weddings?

JANE

What kind of monster reads a woman's dayplanner...?

KEVIN

And how can you afford them all? Airfare to Chicago, Montreal and Cancun, all the "wine of the month" gift certificates..?

JANE

(very sternly)

That's a very thoughtful, yet economical gift!

KEVIN

..not to mention all those shoes you had to dye. I mean, do you have to like, steal?

JANE

Yeah dude. I knock over armored cars to support my wedding habit.

Jane scowls as another empty cab flies past her. Then Kevin puts two fingers in his mouth and WHISTLES.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Right, like that's ever worked--

An empty cab instantly SQUEALS UP. Jane winces, damn. Kevin opens the door for her, smiling.

KEVIN

Hey, you're not going downtown are you?

JANE

No, I'm not! See you never!

Jane gets in the cab -- Kevin makes a move to maybe get in the cab with her. She closes the door before he can and pushes the button on the door, locking it. Through the cab window, Jane smiles at Kevin, smugly.

CUT TO:

INT. WEST VILLAGE ROCKER BAR -- NIGHT

Jane enters this loud rocker bar and finds Nancy. They exchange greetings. The guest of honor, Dawn, happily darts about, talking with everyone.

George walks over, rubbing his temples.

GEORGE

Jane, where've you been? I just called three people by the wrong name!

NANCY

And one of them was the bride.

George blanches and points at Dawn, that's the bride?! The girls nod, oh yeah. He winces.

GEORGE

There's really nothing left for me to do but drink heavily. Want anything?

Nancy holds up her monster Long Island iced tea.

NANCY

Plus I pre-loaded at home.

JANE

No, I'm fine, thanks.

He starts to walk away. Nancy swats Jane.

NANCY

This is what I'm talking about! He asks if you want a drink, you say "yeah, thanks, vodka soda," then there's some drinking, some flirting, a little inter-office sex, accidental pregnancy, shotgun wedding, life of bliss. Do I have to tell you how to do everything?

Jane quickly shushes her as George turns back.

GEORGE

By the way, Jane, did you see what I left on your desk on Friday?

Jane and Nancy stare.

JANE

O-On my desk?

GEORGE

Yeah. I was a little nervous about it. Was it okay?

JANE

Okay...? Yes. It was. Yes.

GEORGE

I'm so glad. You and I haven't really had that kind of relationship before, but... I didn't know what else to do.

Jane just stares at him, frozen, unable to speak. He smiles, and heads back to the bar. Nancy's jaw hangs down...

JANE

He gave me flowers. He gave me flowers. He gave me flowers.

NANCY

Okay. Listen. You can't let this moment slip by. You have to go over and tell him you feel the same way!

JANE

Could he be more perfect?! He is without question the kindest, smartest, handsomest man I've ever met!

Behind them, TESS sweeps into the bar. Every MAN looks up. Jane, locked in her heartfelt monologue, doesn't see her.

JANE (CONT'D)

His integrity impresses me every single day! He represents the best his gender-- nay, this country has to offer!

NANCY

If you don't go over there this second I'm going to punch you in the mouth.

JANE

Okay. Okay. Shit. Here I go...

Jane takes a deep breath and starts walking over to George, whose back is still to her.

...slowly, she closes the distance...

...George gets his drink and turns away from the bar...

...at that exact moment THE CROWD PARTS AROUND TESS. In her cream suit, she practically shimmers in the dark bar...

...Jane tries to catch George's eye...

...but George's attention is drawn over to Tess...

...and Tess, feeling his eyes on her, looks over at George...

...Jane follows George's gaze, and that's how she sees...

THE EXACT MOMENT WHEN TESS AND GEORGE'S EYES MEET

...fireworks, magic hour, angels sing...

...George and Tess are instantly transfixed by each other...

...what passes between them is unmistakable to everyone, including Jane.

And suddenly, horribly, they're all standing there, the three of them, close together. George and Tess do not break their gaze. Tess nudges Jane. Introduce me.

JANE (CONT'D)

Sorry, yes! George, this is my sister,
Tess. Tess, this is my George.

Yikes.

JANE (CONT'D)

No no no! We're not--! I mean--

Mortified, Jane desperately tries to complete a sentence.

JANE (CONT'D)

He would never-- We would never--

GEORGE

Jane is my assistant.

Jane nods, looking like she's just been punched in the gut.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

By the way, sorry about the dry
cleaning.

(to Tess, explaining)

As if I don't take advantage of your
sister enough, I left my dry cleaning
slip on her desk the other day. What a
cliché, right? But I was...desperate...

He trails off, mesmerized by Tess.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Would you by any chance like a drink?

TESS

I have a strict policy about never turning down a drink from a gorgeous guy. Or...from anyone, really.

They laugh and walk off towards the bar. Jane just stands there, stunned. Then Dawn the receptionist sidles up.

DAWN

Jane! Thank you so much for all your help with my wedding planning! Did you get my flowers? Also, I wanted to pick your brain about romantic honeymoon spots. We're thinking Daytona Beach--

JANE

Dawn, honey?

DAWN

Ya?

JANE

I need a sec.

A little spooked, Dawn slowly nods and moves off. Jane calmly
STEPS OUTSIDE

onto an empty patio. Through the glass door we can see, but not hear, Jane jumping up and down, YELLING into the night:

JANE (CONT'D)

MOTHER-FUCKERRRRR!

After a moment, she composes herself and re-enters the bar, smiling her usual, ultra-pleasant smile...

CUT TO:

INT. BAR -- LATER

Someone from work tells a story. Jane pretends to listen, but instead watches Tess and George drinking champagne at a table nearby, completely wrapped up in each other.

Tess hollers to a passing WAITER: more bubbly! The waiter nods and hurries off. George beams, this girl is so fun.

INT. BAR -- LATER

Everyone is dispersing. George and Tess still talk a mile a minute. Jane stands awkwardly beside them, nursing a beer.

JANE
Well, it's late. Tess, you must be beat
from getting in today and--

TESS
Let's go dancing!

JANE
Oh no no no, George hates dan--

GEORGE
I'd love to! Which club?!

Jane looks at George: who is this guy?! Tess turns to Jane:

TESS
You want to come?

Tess's eyes widen conspicuously, implying: don't come. Jane hesitates, then, as always, capitulates.

JANE
Nah, I'm exhausted...

Every particle in her body is screaming: stop them!

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
You two have a great time. I'm just
going to go home and maybe--

TESS
Okay! 'Night!

They wave and blow out of there.

JANE
--drink nail polish remover til I black
out...

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- THAT NIGHT

Jane paces, pissed at herself. Looks at her watch.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Jane furiously does situps on a mat.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- STILL LATER THAT NIGHT

Jane maniacally scrubs her kitchen. A key in the door. Tess creeps in. Then she sees Jane. Confused beat.

TESS
Why are you cleaning the stove?

JANE
This...this, um, this is when I clean
my kitchenware.

Tess shrugs, okay, and collapses on the couch, glowing.

TESS
So! I had the most amazing time with
George tonight!

JANE
(scrubbing, lying awfully)
Oh, right. You guys went out.

TESS
Is that okay? I mean, is that weird
for you...? Because I don't want there
to be anything weird with us...

JANE
(her voice shrill)
Weird?! Why would it be weird?!

TESS
I don't know, but I'm glad it's not --
because we're having lunch tomorrow!

JANE
(still shrill)
Great! I think that's fantastic!

TESS
I do too -- except maybe not quite at
that decibel. (beat) So, what's George
really like? Tell me everything.

As mad as she is, Jane can't help but light up as she talks
about George:

JANE
Well, he's kind. And polite. And he's
very neat, you know? Very together.
Great dresser. He loves his dog,
Gatsby, more than anything.

TESS
 (making a face)
 You don't think they sleep in the same bed, do you?

JANE
 I don't really -- he loves hiking and camping, and he's a vegetarian. And also, he's a YMCA big brother...

TESS
 Do-gooder. Cute. Got it. He's one of those.

JANE
 (stopping, concerned)
 Right. One of...those really amazing... really hard-to-find guys. So, um...
 (trying to laugh)
 Nothing happened between the two of you tonight, did it?

Tess smiles sheepishly. Jane forces a smile as, unaware, she scrubs the burner at a ridiculously fast pace...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WORK -- DAY

Jane is slumped at her desk, miserable, watching TESS and GEORGE in his office. They are standing up, both shyly flirting with each other, very cute. Tess is touching George's arm and laughing at a joke of his. Suddenly, STACY, a fake-cheerful woman who could only work in Human Resources, bounces up.

STACY
 Jane! Hi!

JANE
 Oh! Stacy, hi. Nice to see you.

STACY
Super-nice to see you!

Jane forces a smile and returns to watching Tess and George.

STACY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 So, my fiancé has six brothers, right?!
 And, well, you're sort of the only person here who willingly talks to me?!
 So I was wondering if you'd be one of my bridesmaids! Yay!

George leans over and gives Tess a quick kiss.

JANE
 (watching Tess and George)
 Please find a blunt object and kill me
 now. Just kill me.

STACY
 (smile fading)
 Yes, okay. I understand--

Jane turns back to a dejected Stacy:

JANE
 Oh, no! Not you! Yes, I'd be honored to
 be your bridesmaid, Stacy. Honored.
 (opens her Filofax)
 So: when's your special day?

She turns to today's page and notices something odd.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
The hell is this...?
 (reading)
 "To do today: brush teeth, wear hat,
 buy squirrel..."
 (turning page)
 "For a good time, call (212) --" Oh my
 God, he's so dead.
 (to Stacy)
 Hang on just one second--

Furious, Jane grabs the phone and dials.

INTERCUT WITH KEVIN

walking down the street with a coffee. He answers his cell:

KEVIN
 Hello?

JANE
 Hello? Is this Kevin?

KEVIN
 Yes...

JANE
 So not only do you read my datebook,
 but you deface it, too?! How dare you!

Kevin just laughs.

KEVIN
 How far down the list did you get
 before you noticed? Did you actually
 buy a squirrel?

JANE
This is so not funny.

KEVIN
Oh come on, it's a little funny...You actually have one list that lists all the other lists you have to make.

JANE
Lists are the cornerstone of the organized mind.

KEVIN
Sure. Or the psychotic one.

JANE
(gasping, then)
Are you always this rude?!

Feeling awkward, Stacy just waves, bye, and tiptoes off...

KEVIN
Pretty much, yeah. Look, I'm sorry. I feel bad. Can I buy you a new book?

JANE
No, you can't. Now please go find someone else to be really creepy with.

She HANGS UP the phone hard, and sits there, steaming. What a jerk! Then she hears:

A VOICE
Jane!

She turns to see PEDRO, a Hispanic boy of about 11, approaching. She grins and holds open her arms:

JANE
Pedro! Can you give me a hug -- or have you gotten too cool for that?

PEDRO
You ask me that every week.

JANE
Can't help it, I know my days are numbered.

He gives her a big hug. George and Tess emerge from his office. Pedro runs over to say hello to George.

GEORGE
Tess, this is Pedro, my Little Brother from the YMCA program. Pedro, this is Tess, Jane's sister.

Pedro's jaw drops at how hot Tess is. Tess, who clearly has no great love for children, manages a dry smile.

GEORGE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Jane, Tess and I were about to grab lunch with Pedro. You want to come?

JANE
No, I couldn't, I have so much work...

TESS
Jane, don't you always have to say "yes" when your boss asks you to lunch?

Tess turns towards Jane and just mouths "help me" to her.

JANE
I'd love to come!

Jane forces a smile. As they walk to the elevator, Pedro whispers to Jane...

PEDRO
That's your sister?

Jane nods.

PEDRO (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Man, you must have had a tough childhood.

JANE
You don't know the half of it.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

Jane, George, Pedro and Tess study their menus.

PEDRO
I'm torn between the haddock and the osso bucco.

TESS
I'm going to have the tofu casserole.

Jane looks up, shocked.

JANE
You know that tofu casserole has tofu in it, right?

GEORGE
You're a vegetarian?

Of course. TESS

Cool, so am I. GEORGE

Jane looks at Tess. Since when?

Really? I had no idea. Isn't it fun to be a vegetarian? In fact, when I go hiking, I bring veggie jerky instead of beef jerky. TESS

You like to hike, too? GEORGE

Did you just say the word "jerky?" JANE

Tess nudges Jane. Hard.

Oh, I love all that outdoor crap. Hiking, biking, climbing up...things. TESS

Wow. That's amazing. You struck me as more of a city girl. GEORGE

Struck me that way too... JANE

Yes. Well. I haven't hiked much since my dog died. TESS

Your... GEORGE

Jane and I had this dog growing up -- Tory. I just loved him. Took him on all of our nature...hikes. Not a day goes by when I don't think about that little flea magnet. Ah, good ol' Tory. TESS

George beams at Tess, smitten.

(hissing to Tess)
He died ten years ago-- and his name was Toby. JANE

GEORGE

Jane, how come you never told me about
Tory?

Jane shrugs, who knows? George shakes his head at Tess:

GEORGE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Probably didn't want to look like she
was buttering up the boss. Isn't your
sister a saint?

Tess smiles thinly, clearly unhappy about the attention being
taken off of her for even a second.

TESS

Yes, which is why I've postponed going
back to Paris for a couple weeks. So I
can spend more time with Jane!

Jane looks up, shocked.

JANE

But I thought you had to go back to
work on the big shoo...

TESS

(quite sincerely)

Work is work, Jane, but sisters are
forever.

GEORGE

(clearly pleased)

Well, that's amazing!

JANE

I'm stunned!

GEORGE

(shyly)

I don't want to be too pushy, but I
hope you might be able to squeeze some
time in for me as well...

TESS

I think that can be arranged...

She fixes her gaze on him, flirty, seductive...

EXT. RESTAURANT -- LATER

George walks Pedro to the subway. Tess and Jane wait.

JANE

(so sarcastic)

Sisters are forever?

TESS
What? That's sweet!

JANE
What about the photo shoot? Roberto...?

TESS
Please, he's got four other assistants, he won't even notice I'm gone. I like George and I want to get to know him!

JANE
Well, I'm certainly getting to know you. Since when do you like the outdoors so much?

TESS
I like yachts. I like flowers. I like, you know, tanning. All outdoors.

JANE
You hated Toby. The only animals you've ever liked are dead ones with sleeves.

TESS
I know what you're doing.

JANE
(taken aback)
Y-You do?

TESS
Yeah: you're worried I'm going back to being the old Tess who completely changes herself for the first cute guy she meets. Am I right?

JANE
N-not really--

Not hearing her, Tess hugs her, touched.

TESS
Don't worry, this is different. I really like George, and I really want him to like me, too-- is that so wrong?

JANE
Well, no, but I just think that you should...

TESS
(interrupting)
Oh, by the way, George's "little brother?" Kept dropping his napkin so he could look up my skirt.

Jane, appalled, is about to protest, when George walks back up to them.

TESS (cont'd)
(with a big smile)
Well, isn't that Pedro the cutest thing ever?

MUSIC UP

MONTAGE:

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

Tess, George, Jane and Hal have dinner. Hal hangs on his every word, laughing. We pan over to Jane, who's quietly stuffing her face with a monster plate of french fries.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- THE NEXT DAY

Jane stretches on her floor, post-jog, reading the VOWS SECTION of the Sunday Times. The doorbell rings. Jane opens the door to receive a huge arrangement of lilies.

Tess appears from her bedroom, and Jane, without even looking at the card, immediately hands the flowers to her. Beaming, Tess reads the card and puts the lilies on the coffee table.

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE -- THE NEXT DAY

Jane enters with folders in hand, about to say something -- then she sees Tess, sitting on George's lap, playfully feeding him grapes. Jane stops, places the files on an already tall stack on his desk, and silently exits.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- A FEW NIGHTS LATER

A forest of lilies now sit on the coffee table. Jane and Tess eat dinner in her living room, talking, having a nice time. Then Tess gets TEXT-MESSAGED by George on her cellphone. She reads the message, SHRIEKS, kisses Jane on the cheek, grabs her keys, and bolts out of the apartment.

Jane sits there, abandoned in under three seconds. Nice.

INT. WEDDING HALL -- A FEW NIGHTS LATER

Jane is dressed as a ROCK N' ROLL BRIDESMAID (black tank top, alt ballerina dress, combat boots, pigtails) for Dawn's wedding. She stands with five other identically dressed bridesmaids as Dawn and her husband take their vows.

In the audience, Tess snuggles up to George -- both look, as always, gorgeous and happy. They wave at Jane, trying not to laugh. She half-heartedly flips them the sign-of-the-devil rock n' roll hand signal. Pure misery.

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE -- A COUPLE DAYS LATER

George's office is empty. Jane walks in with more folders for his now huge stack of files -- he clearly hasn't been working at all. Then Jane stops, fuck it, and, with all her strength, she grabs all his files and takes them back out to her desk, starts working on them herself.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- THE NEXT NIGHT

Jane walks in, drained from work. Her entire apartment is now covered in lilies. More alarming, however, are George and Tess passionately making out on her couch. They don't hear Jane. She sighs, then exits her own apartment...

MUSIC OUT

INT. OFFICE -- NIGHT

Exhausted and yawning, Jane works away on the stack of files. George exits his office, holding up two ties, distracted. Jane points to one.

JANE

So, it turns out Minkov still has a ton of connections in St. Petersburg. I thought we could look into that angle.

GEORGE

(half-listening)

Yes, please do. Thanks.

He ties his tie, looking a little out of sorts. Jane notices.

JANE

Are you...okay?

GEORGE

Yeah. I'm...

He looks about ready to tell her something, but pulls back.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm great. I'm great. Look, I'm sorry I've been so MIA lately. But hey, Play is the new Work, right? An old buddy of mine told me that... Well, 'night.

He smiles and exits. Jane CLONKS her head down on her desk:

JANE

"An old buddy?!"

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Jane organizes George's desk for the next day -- when she notices he left his wallet on his chair... Jane quickly checks his desk calendar. Fornarino's is circled.

EXT. FORNARINO'S RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Jane gets out of a cab. She rushes towards the restaurant.

INT. FORNARINO'S RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Jane enters...into an odd silence. The place is empty -- save for dozens of roses and lit candles. As Jane steps in, a STROLLING BAND starts playing traditional ITALIAN MUSIC and two waiters unfurl a hand-lettered BANNER reading:

"WILL YOU MARRY ME?"

Jane stands there, dumbstruck, holding George's wallet, as he steps out, smiling -- then he sees Jane and stops.

GEORGE

Wait... Wait... WAIT!

But the band keeps going. George makes the throat-slit gesture for stop, shouting:

GEORGE (CONT'D)

This is not her! She's not the one!

(music cuts out)

SHE IS NOT THE ONE!

The waiters slowly lower the banner, eyeing Jane grumpily.

JANE

(mortified)

I'm so sorry. On every level. You just...you forgot your wallet.

GEORGE

(taking wallet)

Oh. Thanks.

JANE

I should've called your cell, but this place is right on my way--

And right then TESS walks in.

TESS

Sorry I'm late, sweetheart--

The BANDLEADER looks at George, a little exasperated, is this the one? George nods, yes yes, go, play! Tess notices the flowers, the candles...

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Jane? What's going on here--?

The BAND starts playing as the waiters scramble to uncrumple the BANNER. Tess reads it, looks at George.

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Oh my God!

Jane is too horrified to move. Her eyes are saucers.

GEORGE
Tess, we only met a month ago. But I
knew you were the woman of my dreams
the second I saw you...
(approaching her)
I can't wait any longer. Will you marry
me?

TESS
Yes! Yes, yes, yes!

Tess kisses George again and again. Jane just stands there as her sister makes out with the man of her dreams. Quietly:

JANE
Yes. Well. I would've rather gouged my
eyes out than seen that...

Next to Jane, the band's ACCORDION PLAYER looks at her, bitch, and steps away. While George and Tess continue kissing, oblivious to the world, Jane slowly slinks out...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HAL'S HOUSE -- DAY

Tess proudly shows Hal her engagement ring. Hal hugs Tess, then draws George into a bear hug as well. Jane watches.

HAL
I love this man. First you give Jane a
job, and then you get my princess to
stay in America...!
(he starts tearing up)
Wait. I've got something for you, Tess.

He disappears into a room, then comes back holding a dress. Their mother's wedding dress.

HAL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Mom would've wanted you to have it.

Jane tries not to burst into tears.

HAL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I didn't know who might need this
first...but if Jane doesn't mind...

JANE
(beat, then)
No, of course not...

HAL
(kissing Jane on her
forehead)
Jane, you're a saint.

Jane and Tess both seem annoyed by that remark. Hal now hugs Tess.

HAL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I've been saving up my whole life to
give you girls the weddings you
deserve. Who knew my little Tess would
be the first!

Tess turns to Jane.

TESS
Can you believe all this is happening?!

JANE
Nope! Really can't.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK -- DAY

A gorgeous day in The Park. Tess, in pink, sits by the fountain, just glowing. Jane slouches next to her, depressed.

TESS
So I thought about what you said and
you're right: it would be so special to
have a wedding just like Mom and Dad's,
especially since I'm wearing her dress.

JANE
Am I too old to start smoking? Because
I think I'm ready--

TESS
(doesn't hear Jane)
So I called Tavern on the Green, but
they had no availability for eighteen
months. Then, all of a sudden, the guy
says, wait, we have a cancellation, so:
(she smiles)
We're getting married in three weeks!

Tess hugs Jane; Jane barely manages to get one arm up.

JANE
Three weeks? At Tavern on the Green?

TESS
 Yeah. What? That's not weird is it?

JANE
 No, it makes perfect sense. I've only been talking about it since I was eleven!

TESS
 Well, good. We can't have a grumpy maid of honor, can we?

JANE
 Excuse me?

TESS
 Well, you are going to be my maid of honor, aren't you?

JANE
 Oh...Of course.

TESS
 (barely waiting for a response)
 "Duh," right? And I also asked Robin to be a bridesmaid.

JANE
 Who?

TESS
 Our cousin, Robin? Sorry, I know you don't like her.

JANE
 Why wouldn't I like someone who made fun of my small breasts for the first twenty years of my life?

TESS
 I know, she's a bitch. And for the third bridesmaid, I need your help. Will you ask Nancy?

JANE
My Nancy?

TESS
 George has three groomsmen. I need the same number.

(MORE)

TESS (cont'd)
 I know she's mainly your friend, but we did all grow up together and you know I don't have a lot of girlfriends. Girls don't like me for some reason.

(off Jane's look)
 Okay, fine, so I know why. Will you ask Nancy? Please?

JANE
 Sure. She'll be thrilled.
 (on automatic pilot)
 So we have to get the invitations out.

TESS
 (so excited)
 Yes! I think I'll need about 450.

JANE
 Mmm, sounds cozy-- And we can get the cake from Antoine's, the flowers from either Budding Romance or Love in Bloom...

TESS
 And I think you should do a slide show at the rehearsal dinner -- you know, put cute photos of George and I together and say funny things.

JANE
 Great, 'cuz, that doesn't sound like a lot of work...

TESS
 And I want that guy you like, Malcolm Doyle to write our wedding announcement for the Times!

JANE
 What?

TESS
 Well, you said he's the best...

JANE
 Yes, but it's not that easy to get your wedding in the Vows Section, let alone request...

TESS
 If anyone can do it, it's you Jane!
 (Tess hugs Jane)
 This is so great! You and I are going to do this together, every step of the way!

Tess hugs her, genuinely emotional. Jane forces the weakest of smiles, then eventually hugs her back, okay, okay...

INT. YOGA STUDIO -- DAY

Earthy YOGA TYPES mingle, talking in muted tones before class starts. Candles burn. Whale music. Then we hear Nancy yell:

NANCY
YOU'RE GOING TO BE THAT WHORE'S MAID OF HONOR?!

All of the yoga types glare over at Jane and Nancy in the corner. Jane anxiously waves at them, sorry:

JANE
I'm so sorry. Namaste, namaste.

Nancy ignores them, whatever. Jane whispers to her:

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
She's my sister, Nance. And she wants you to be a bridesmaid, too.

NANCY
(loud)
You're shitting me.

More glares. Jane bows at the angry yogists, sorry, sorry!

NANCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Well, at least Tess has no friends, right? I mean, if she was skinny with big tits and popular, I'd either have to kill her, or myself.

JANE
So that's a yes? You'll be a bridesmaid?
(Nancy winces)
Come on, it'll be...fun...sort of...?
(still not convinced)
There'll be lots of male models there...?

NANCY
Fine. But if Tess even attempts to order me around or whines once in my direction, I will kill her while she sleeps.

Jane laughs -- but Nancy isn't kidding...

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Jane is pacing around her little cubicle.

JANE

Hi, my name is Jane Harris, I'd like to speak to Maureen Keagan, the editor of the Vows section? (beat) It's in regards to a bride that would like to be included. (beat) Hello?

Jane's been cut off. She dials again.

JANE (cont'd)

(possibly different voice)

Hello, I'd like to speak to Maureen Keagan, please. (beat) It's in regards to her apartment -- her cable's back on but now we need to talk to her about her electric.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. NEW YORK TIMES -- DAY

On the other end of the phone, a burnt-out Vows editor, MAUREEN KEAGAN, 50's has reluctantly picked up her phone. A five-time divorcee, she's smoking Pall Mall's.

MAUREEN

Keagan here, what do you want?

JANE

(in one breath)

Hi. My name is Jane Harris. I'm calling for my sister, Tess, she's getting married soon and --

MAUREEN

(shouting out to someone)

It's called "screening," Corinne!

Maureen is about to hang up the phone.

JANE

(not having stopped talking)

....she's an enormously successful and photogenic fashion designer from Paris, and her fiance, George Scanlon, an incredibly handsome executive producer of the hit television news program "7 Days?"

MAUREEN

Take a breath. I'm still here.

JANE

(taking a breath)

Great.

(MORE)

JANE (cont'd)
They're getting married in three weeks
and are hoping to be featured in your
Vows Section?

MAUREEN
(deadpan)
What a surprise. You have one minute to
tell me what's so epic, heartwarming,
and/or life-affirming about the Tess
and George love story.

JANE
(thinking fast)
Well, where do I begin -- Tess and
George have this deep bond that could
be considered...

MAUREEN
Yes?

JANE
(not really, tries again)
No. Uh, Tess is the first person who
truly understands what's going on at
the very core of George's...George
knows Tess like -

MAUREEN
I'm hanging up now...

JANE
(rallying)
George was a single man devoted to his
job, his few hobbies and his dog,
Gatsby -- that is until he met Tess --
who's style, beauty and exuberance
turned this confirmed bachelor into a
wide-eyed romantic!

MAUREEN
(impressed)
Not bad. I'll assign someone. See what
we got.

JANE
Thanks.

Maureen is about to hang up the phone.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(pushing it)
Actually, I was hoping you could assign
Malcolm Doyle to the wedding.

MAUREEN
Now, I'm really hanging up.

JANE

Please, he's the best you have. The Sinjay wedding? It was like romance crack. The Berkoff wedding at the Public Library? It made me want to read more. The Reese wedding, when he wrote "The Brooklyn Bridge cradled the couple over the Hudson River, just like the...?"

MAUREEN

(irritated)

Fine. You got him.

JANE

Thanks!

Maureen hangs up.

MAUREEN

Freak.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ANTOINE'S WEDDING CAKE STORE -- DAY

Trying to be all business, Jane hurries into this wedding cake store, followed by Tess and George. Behind the counter, working on an ornate PALACE-SHAPED WEDDING CAKE, is a French man with a shirt unbuttoned way too low. ANTOINE, of course.

ANTOINE

Jane! It's been ages. I meet many people -- they all say "Jane sent me" -- yet no Jane.

JANE

Sorry, Antoine, when you're trying to hold down a full-time job, sometimes you just have to delegate.

ANTOINE

Ah, I see. Well, then this must be a special occasion -- to what do I owe this honor?

JANE

Well, this is my sister, Tess. She's engaged to my... this is George. And they need a cake.

ANTOINE

Eh bien! Felicitation!

JANE

In three weeks.

ANTOINE

Non! Three weeks?! It cannot be done!

Tess looks panicked. Jane takes her arm, stay calm, then looks at Antoine, sternly: you owe me. He hesitates, then:

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

But for Jane...? Okay. Three weeks.

(smiling at Tess)

You are very lucky to have this sister Jane. She is a...how do you say--?

TESS

(too quickly, irritated)

A saint?

ANTOINE

Oui!

TESS

Yeah, she gets that a lot.

Tess quickly smiles away her annoyance. Antoine gestures for them to peruse his store.

ANTOINE

Look at my work, then we talk.

Tess and George start perusing the beautiful cakes, excited. Jane watches them, quietly dying. Then she turns to Antoine, and admires his latest, extravagant, palace-shaped creation.

JANE

It's beautiful.

ANTOINE

Yes, but making it is no piece of cake.

JANE

(pointing at him)

Baking humor, 'Twon. And they say it's a lost art...

They share a smile, just as--

VOICE BEHIND HER

Hi, I'm Malcolm Doyle, I'm here to meet Tess Harris?

Jane frowns, somehow that voice sounds familiar. She turns to see KEVIN standing by the counter. He's unshaven as always, wearing an old corduroy blazer and beat-up jeans.

JANE

What?

Kevin looks equally surprised, but he's pleased. Tess runs up to him.

TESS

Yay! You're here, you're here, you're here! I wasn't going to believe we got you until you actually showed up!

JANE

(stunned)

But...your name is Kevin. As in -- Kevin.

KEVIN

(to Jane)

Kevin's my real name, I use Malcolm for the byline -- minimizes the amount of crazed ladies stalking me every day. Speaking of which -- I'm going to guess you must be one of the, bridesmaids?

JANE

I'm trying to think how this could get any worse...

TESS

This is my sister Jane, she is obsessed with your column! She practically stalked you to get you here!

JANE

And there it is--

(quickly to Kevin)

I'm not...I didn't... My sister is...high.

TESS

She is! She said you write the best ones, which is why I got Jane to ask if you could cover our wedding! I only get the best!

KEVIN

(to Jane, enjoying this)

Wow -- you requested me?

Jane blanches:

JANE

Who did I kill in a past life?

TESS

(quickly, to Kevin)

That's off the record!

JANE

So, do you secretly believe in love and marriage and pretend to be a cynic, or are you actually a cynic who just knows how to spin romantic crap that girls like me go for?

KEVIN

B.

Jane scowls, seriously disillusioned...

JANE

Man, I feel like I just found out my favorite love song was written about a sandwich. This sucks.

Jane stalks off. Tess forces a smile at Kevin, *what just happened?* Kevin just shrugs good-naturedly:

KEVIN

Always nice to meet a fan.

(to Tess)

So tell me how you and George met...

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK TIMES -- DAY

Kevin walks through the hallowed halls of the New York Times. He passes the NEWS PEN, where all the real journalists ply their craft. He sneaks a glance at them, covetous...

Then he falls in with DAVE, a short, athletic sports writer -- and Kevin's best friend. They knock fists, say hi.

DAVE

Hey, wanna go to the Garden tonight?
Ed's sick and I'm covering Knicks-Heat.

KEVIN

(sheepish)

I've got...a rehearsal dinner to cover.

Dave just looks at him, faux offended:

DAVE

What?! I invite you to my work stuff,
but you don't invite me to yours?!

Dave laughs. Kevin smiles, clearly used to the ribbing.

DAVE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Really, screw the floor seats -- let's
hit that rehearsal dinner, man! It
sounds insane-o!

KEVIN
It's a shame that writing about tall
people doesn't make you any taller.

Dave laughs and flips him off.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Besides, I think I just found my ticket
out of the taffeta ghetto.

DAVE
Oh, yeah? How..?

CUT TO:

KEVIN (V.O.)
I've got a great story...

We are now

INT. EDITOR'S OFFICE -- DAY

Kevin is now pitching to his editor, Maureen.

KEVIN
...she's already been a bridesmaid six
times this year. And the weirdest part
is, she actually likes it.

MAUREEN
I know, I talked to her. Almost gave
her my job.

KEVIN
See? She's the perfect subject for a
profile.

Maureen thinks about it.

MAUREEN
How many inches do you want?

KEVIN
(surprised)
Really?

MAUREEN
Since we can't shoot her, we might as
well get some good copy out of her.

KEVIN
(gambling)
How about 24?

Maureen looks at him like he's pushing it.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Title: "Always, Always, Always A
 Bridesmaid." It could be a fresh angle
 for the section.

MAUREEN
 For the section? Please, you only want
 a feature so the guys upstairs notice
 you and bump you up to staff writer,
 let you cover the real news.

KEVIN
 (busted, conceding)
 Fine. Yeah, I want my bump. Little boys
 don't exactly dream of growing up and
 becoming wedding columnists, you know?

Maureen spins around to the CHALKBOARD behind her desk that
 lists all the upcoming stories, studies it...

MAUREEN
 But I suppose my boring-ass whitebread
 section could use a feature profile...
 I just don't know about this lunatic
 bridesmaid angle... Get me more.

Kevin nods, determined, and hurries out.

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Jane is bustling about her apartment when the doorbell rings.
 She looks through her peephole, it's Kevin. Jane gasps.

JANE
 Have you ever heard of calling ahead?!

KEVIN (THROUGH DOOR)
 I have, actually, yeah.

Jane scurries over to her pile of Kevin's columns, picks them
 up, and frantically looks where to shove them.

JANE
 Yes, well, Tess isn't here!

KEVIN (THROUGH DOOR)
 Actually, it's you I wanted to see.

She curses, and shoves all the papers under her comforter.

JANE
Me? Why?

KEVIN (THROUGH DOOR)
 I talk to all the families and friends
 of the couple. It helps me discover the
 hidden, unifying theme to their story.
 Just give me ten minutes, please?

Jane OPENS THE DOOR.

JANE
 You've got three. Kevin. Malcolm.
 Whatever.

Kevin enters, highly alert, and immediately notices the
 stunning PICTURE OF TESS in the entryway.

KEVIN
 Interesting choice...

Jane frowns. Kevin produces a notepad and fumbles for a pen
 as he moves about the place, subtly observing everything...

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 So, is it weird having your younger
 sister get married before you?

JANE
 Nope. I couldn't be happier for her.

He glances in the kitchenette...

KEVIN
 You actually mean that?

JANE
 Of course I mean it! She's my kid
 sister. I taught her how to tell time,
 how to ride a bike, how to steam
 flounder in the dishwasher. I
 practically raised her.
 (quickly)
*Oh God, please don't put that in,
 that'd kill my father--*

Kevin shakes his head, I won't -- then he notices her front
 hall closet. The door is slightly ajar.

KEVIN
 Wait, are those...?

He crosses to the closet and opens it to reveal: ALL OF
 JANE'S BRIDESMAID DRESSES.

JANE
 Excuse me, that's--!

KEVIN
Are these all bridesmaids dresses?

JANE
What does this have to with Tess?!

She tries to close the closet door. He easily slides his foot in the track, keeping the door open. He pulls out an awful mint green dress with a hoop skirt.

KEVIN
What in God's name is this?

Jane goes to chastise him...then concedes.

JANE
Theme wedding.

KEVIN
What was the theme? Crush Your Self-Esteem?

FLASH!

A WEDDING PICTURE

An outdoor wedding with a plantation theme -- the GROOMSMEN with floppy string ties, the BRIDESMAIDS in pastel hoop skirts, bonnets, parasols. Jane is in the mint green.

FLASH BLACK TO

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

Kevin holds up the dress.

JANE
It was a Gone With the Wind Wedding. I went to junior high with the bride.

KEVIN
People do not have Gone With the Wind Weddings.

JANE
I've been in four.

He looks amazed. He holds up another dress, slinky and short.

JANE (CONT'D)
L.A. My dental hygienist.

FLASH!

The Four Seasons. An older man and his toupeed and greying GROOMSMEN marrying a surgically altered TROPHY WIFE, surrounded by BRIDESMAIDS with fake boobs bursting out their dresses...and JANE, who doesn't even nearly fill hers.

FLASH BACK TO

Kevin holds up another awful dress. Denim, boxy.

JANE (CONT'D)
That was Sarah and Sara.

FLASH!

JANE (CONT'D)
Met them at kickboxing class.

A lesbian wedding. The BRIDES are kissing. So are the two BRIDESMAIDS standing beside Jane. She just forces a smile.

FLASH!

A wedding in the pouring rain.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
My second cousin once removed.

FLASH!

A wedding where everyone is Asian but Jane.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Did an internship with her senior year.

FLASH!

An underwater wedding...the BRIDE'S veil floats in the water and the bridesmaids wear matching frilly bathing suits. Jane does her best to smile with a SCUBA regulator in her mouth.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I think I met her at Quiznos. Not sure.

BACK TO:

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

Kevin just looks at all the dresses in her closet, amazed.

KEVIN
Why don't you throw them out?

JANE
They're...you can't...they're
bridesmaid dresses...

KEVIN

So you just let them take up your entire closet. Interesting choice.

JANE

(annoyed)

Is it, though?

KEVIN

Seriously, I know people like you. Always doing for others, always being so nice, and then one day they walk into Pottery Barn and just start shooting.

JANE

Oh, please. There's no dark secret here. I love weddings. Even the silly ones are touching in their own way. And I like being a bridesmaid -- whether that means just showing up to the wedding, or having to re-caulk a pool in under three hours.

KEVIN

(appalled)

You did that as a bridesmaid?

JANE

I'm a really good caulker. Nothing makes me happier than being there for the people I love. Nothing.

He nods -- then reconsiders what she just said:

KEVIN

Wait. Really? Nothing makes you happier than being there for people? What about the stuff you do for yourself? Don't you have needs?

JANE

(deadpan)

No. I don't. I'm Jesus. Now get out of here, I'm late.

KEVIN

But I have like twenty more questions!

She starts physically pushing him towards the door.

JANE

And don't think for a second that it doesn't break my heart that you can't ask them...

KEVIN
 (over his shoulder)
 Okay okay, last question: exactly how
 many bridesmaid dresses do you have?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK TIMES -- DAY

Kevin blows into Maureen's office. She's on the phone.

MAUREEN
 (overly-sweet)
 I'm so sorry our photo made your
 daughter look, um, plump, Mrs. Von
 Straten. It could've been the lighting,
 or the cropping --

Maureen puts her phone on mute.

MAUREEN (cont'd)
 (screaming into phone)
 -- or maybe your daughter's just a
 fatty. (beat) God, how I love the mute
 button.

She "unmutes" herself.

MAUREEN (cont'd)
 (listening to yelling)
 Yes, ma'am, I understand you play golf
 regularly with our beloved Mayor...

Maureen rolls her eyes, unbelievable. Kevin walks over to the
 blackboard behind her desk and writes, in big numbers: 27.

Maureen wrinkles her brow. What? Kevin writes more:

27 DRESSES. 27 WEDDINGS.

Maureen gasps.

MAUREEN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Oh my God. She's the Bridesmaid that
 ate Manhattan.
 (into phone)
 No, not your daughter, ma'am. No.

She mutes the phone.

MAUREEN (cont'd)
 Yes, your fatty Van fatty daughter, you
 anorexic dried-up little poodle--

Mrs. Von Straten starts screaming from the other end of the
 phone.

MAUREEN (cont'd)
 (mortified, fiddles with
 mute button)
 Mrs. Von Straten, I'm so sorry -- I --
 (aside, to Kevin)
You've got 20 inches-- and don't make
me regret this.

Kevin hurries out of the office, nodding, thank you, and
 Maureen is left striking her phone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WILLIAMS-SONOMA -- THE NEXT DAY

Jane and Kevin walk through Williams-Sonoma, both holding
 electronic REGISTRY GUNS. Jane consults a list, then shoots a
 casserole dish.

KEVIN
 Doesn't it sicken you just a little?
 The conspicuous consumption? The greed?
 I mean, your sister wants so many
 wedding gifts from so many stores that
 she physically can't register for all
 of them by herself!

JANE
 Just gives her guests more options.

KEVIN
 Right, I forgot, you only see the
 sunshine in people-- good god, *is she*
registering for another casserole dish?

Jane is in fact shooting another, larger casserole dish.

JANE
 To you it's just another dish. To Tess,
 it's the pot she's going to cook my
 mom's famous Christmas roast in.

KEVIN
 Tess cooks?

JANE
 And the vase we just registered for?
 That's not just any vase, it's the vase
 that Tess will always get out when
 George comes home with flowers for her,
 just because he felt like it...

She's getting emotional. Kevin shoots a hideous DUCK-SHAPED
 UMBRELLA HOLDER and says, melodramatically:

KEVIN

And this is the duck-shaped umbrella holder that George will always put his umbrellas in when it rains...

Scowling, she shoots the umbrella holder, un-registering it.

JANE

Fine, be a dick. All I'm saying is this is more than just stuff. These are the things that make up a life together.

KEVIN

No. This is the useless crap that the 70 billion-dollar-a-year Wedding Industry has convinced America they need to be happy. It's a total waste.

JANE

Ah, you'll change your tune when you get married. They all do.

She moves off; Kevin follows, a little too intense:

KEVIN

Oh, and what makes you think I'm ever getting married?

JANE

Oh god, how old are you, 17? *Bachelor for life, man! Runnin' ho's til I go!* Please. You're married in 5 years easy.

KEVIN

(serious)

No, I really won't be.

He angrily shoots a ridiculous BEAVER WALL-HANGING.

KEVIN (cont'd)

Did you know that the more educated a culture gets, the more its marriage rate declines? Marriage is literally for dumb people.

She heatedly "unshoots" the wall hanging.

JANE

You know what I think? I think all your little theories and statistics are just smokescreen. I think you hate marriage because it's hard. It's scary.

They're face to face, their tempers rising...

KEVIN

And I think you love marriage because you've read too many books with pink covers. You naively think all marital problems can be solved in an hour plus commercials. But I'm in the trenches everyday, honey, and let me tell you:
(a little too forceful)
Marriage is archaic, oppressive, and unnatural. It never works. And I'm never doing it!

He's now indignantly jabbing his gun at her. She steps back.

JANE

Okay, seriously, where's this anger coming from? Did your parents fight? Did you always get picked last at kickball? Your mom leave you at the mall one day and never come back?

Kevin just rolls his eyes...Jane is almost laughing.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Your wife cheat on you--?

Kevin hesitates almost imperceptibly. Jane stops, covering her mouth, realizing she's just stumbled upon it.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Oh shit, Kevin, I'm so sorry.

He looks away, not wanting to talk about this...

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Oh shit...How many years ago?

After a while, Kevin concedes.

KEVIN

Three.

JANE

And how many years were you married?

KEVIN

Two.

For the first time, Jane looks at him with real sympathy in her eyes... Kevin fidgets uncomfortably.

JANE

You want to find the ugliest thing in the store and register Tess for it?

He nods, slowly starting to smile again. She smiles back, okay, and spins the scanner gun on her finger like a cowboy:

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Let's ride.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TAVERN ON THE GREEN -- DINING ROOM -- DAY

Jane hurries into the hotel dining room; a romantic table for two has been set up. George is waiting, elegant in a suit.

GEORGE
 Tess just called, she's stuck at her fitting. She said she trusted your opinion on the food. Just no garlic or--

JANE
 --red foods, of course, rookie stuff.

GEORGE
 So. Would you care to join me?

George pulls Jane's seat out. She smiles, thanks, and sits.

JANE
 Wow. This is...intimate.

It really is. A CHEF appears with several appetizers.

CHEF
 I think you will be pleased with these samples of your wedding dinner.

JANE
 Oh no, I'm not his--

GEORGE
 She's not my-- We're just pretending to be bride and groom.

The Chef just looks at them like they're weirdos.

CHEF
 Whatever gets you off, dude.

He puts the food down and walks off. Jane and George exchange a look and stifle laughter.

INT. DINING ROOM -- LATER

Empty plates and wineglasses litter the table. Jane and George are having a great time. They're a little buzzed.

JANE

...so my contacts at the courthouse
said this guy Petrov worked for Minkov--

GEORGE

Jane Jane Jane, stop talking about
work. You're not my assistant now,
you're my bride, remember?

Jane grins, so happy she can't believe it.

JANE

What's this dish again?

GEORGE

Polenta.

JANE

Is that just a fancy name for corn
mush?

GEORGE

Pretty much.

They both laugh. They share a moment... Then a SOMEILIER
approaches with four more tasting flights of wine.

JANE

Yes, because clearly we need more wine!
Broad daylight and I am c-rocked!

They toast glasses, laughing. Wine splashes.

BEHIND THEM

Kevin enters the restaurant, sees George and Jane at their
table, and starts over-- when Jane SHRIEKS with laughter and
flirtatiously hits George's arm.

Kevin stops cold, instantly putting the pieces together.

CUT TO:

KEVIN (V.O.)

Oh my god, it's almost Greek!

EXT. TAVERN ON THE GREEN -- DAY

Jane and Kevin walk from the hotel; Jane's a little tipsy,
Kevin is excited. In the background, George walks off in the
other direction.

KEVIN

You're planning the wedding of your
sister -- to the man you love!

JANE
 (shocked, embarrassed)
 I-I have no idea what you're talking about!

Her face beet red, she hurries into the street and attempts to hail a cab. He follows her.

KEVIN
 I mean, how do you not say something?!

She furiously does her best to ignore him as she tries to hail a cab. Then Kevin puts his fingers in his mouth and WHISTLES. A cab magically appears. Kevin opens the door--

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Come on, off the record.

But Jane just storms off, refusing to talk-- or take the cab.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NEW YORK TIMES -- DAY

Kevin paces in Maureen's office. She's reading some pages.

KEVIN
 Am I capturing her? How pathologically nice she is? How she's always the good sister, the good daughter, the good assistant, the good bridesmaid...?

MAUREEN
 Had a roommate like her once. Denise. Totally selfless. Took care of everyone, mom to the world.

KEVIN
 What happened to her?

MAUREEN
 Bellevue. Intentionally drove her Jetta through an OfficeMax.

KEVIN
 Wow.

MAUREEN
 Good work. We're running it Sunday.

KEVIN
This Sunday? But the wedding is next week!

MAUREEN

Forget the wedding. This girl is the story, and this is the best stuff you've written. I'm running it Sunday.

KEVIN

Maureen, please. Don't. The story isn't finished. It's too simplistic, it's too harsh, I can make it better...

(she hedges)

I'll cover the Moonie group wedding if you don't run it Sunday...

(still hedging)

And the nudist wedding in Trenton...

(still hedging)

Do you know how gross those people are?

(still hedging)

Okay, and the cocker spaniel wedding in Greenwich.

She finally concedes.

MAUREEN

Fine.

He sighs, *jesus*.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRIDAL STORE -- THE NEXT DAY

Tess waits outside a dressing room, excited. Kevin is sitting awkwardly on one of the tiny sofas.

Finally the changing room door opens and Jane emerges in her bridesmaid dress. It's a simple wine colored sheath.

TESS

It's so pretty...

Kevin nods. He's gotta admit. Jane looks good.

But then she turns around. There's a huge polka dot bow on the back of the dress. Massive and crinkly. Kevin jerks back.

TESS (CONT'D)

And don't you just love the bow?! Do you think it's big enough?

JANE

Y-Yes?

Grinning, Tess ducks into the dressing room. Kevin has his pen poised over his notebook.

KEVIN

So like, what's the technical term for that? Ass Bow? Butt garnish?

Jane is too busy staring at her massive butt bow to respond.

TESS (O.S.)

(calls out)

And the best thing is, you can shorten it and wear it again.

JANE

(weakly, rote)

What a great idea...

Just then ROBIN, 30, the bitchy bridesmaid cousin, steps out of her dressing room in a dress that matches Jane's. She checks herself out in the mirror.

ROBIN

Wow, I look hot as shit.

(to Jane)

Hey, you don't look so bad yourself.

JANE

Oh. Thanks, Robin...

Jane looks surprised, maybe Robin has changed...

ROBIN

In the right light, you almost have cleavage.

Jane slumps. There it is. Just then we hear a loud RIPPING SOUND. Then NANCY steps out of her changing room in her dress. Her bow is no longer attached to her dress.

NANCY

Weird. Mine didn't come with a bow.

And then another dressing room door opens...and out walks TESS, in a stunning WEDDING DRESS.

ROBIN

Oh my God, it's gorge.

Kevin nods appreciatively, Tess looks fantastic. But it's not their mom's dress. Jane looks confused.

JANE

Um...I thought you were wearing Mom's dress.

TESS

This is Mom's dress. Well, some of it is. I mean, it was so old fashioned, we could only use parts of it.

JANE

Parts?

TESS

Yes, like this embroidery, this trim here, some of the satin for this part around the shoulders...

JANE

You...cut up Mom's wedding dress?

TESS

Well, technically Mariella did. What? Was that weird?

Kevin sits up, whoa.

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I just thought you could have the rest of the material for when you got married...? What? Was that bad?

JANE

(holding it in)

No. It's fine.

TESS

Ok. Great!

Tess smiles and walks away. With pity in her eyes, MARIELLA hands Jane the TINY REMNANTS of her mother's dress. Jane looks at them, speechless. Nancy hurries over.

NANCY

Okay, now we have to eff her up. Seriously. This is way over the line.

JANE

No, no, this is her special day...

NANCY

No, honey, next Saturday is her special day, today she's just some bitch who cut up your mom's wedding dress.

Jane sees Kevin watching her closely. Is she finally going to stand up for herself?

JANE

It's just a dress...it doesn't matter.

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Jane hurries out of the bridal store, barely holding it together. Tess follows her out.

TESS

Oh, Jane, one last thing!

Jane stops. Swallows back her anger. And turns.

TESS (CONT'D)

The flowergirls' tiaras are finally ready. Thing is, they're at a boutique up in Rhinebeck...

Tess lets it hang there... Jane instinctively volunteers.

JANE

Why don't I just go get them?

TESS

Oh, really? Are you sure?

JANE

Sure I'm sure.

KEVIN

I'd be happy to drive.

They both turn and see Kevin, smiling, holding his keys.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I've been trying to get a ten minute interview with Jane, this'll give us plenty of time...

TESS

Great! Now Jane, behave yourself, try not to act like too much of a groupie!

Tess laughs. Jane just grits her teeth and follows Kevin off.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jane and Kevin walk to his car, a beat-up '79 Volvo.

KEVIN

This is what I'm talking about. Your sister just tore up your mother's wedding dress and all you did was offer to help her more. It's crazy, you will do anything for anyone -- except for yourself.

JANE

Did it ever cross your mind that I
enjoy helping people?

He unlocks the car.

KEVIN

Yeah, and Obsessive-Compulsives just
enjoy washing their hands.

Jane angrily opens the door, gets in. Kevin joins her

INSIDE THE CAR

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Why don't you just admit tha--

But Jane is already SOBBING. Loudly. Hysterically. Big deep
sobs. Like most men, Kevin freezes, horrified.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Oh no. Don't...do that...

Jane just keeps sobbing.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Please...?

So much more sobbing.

JANE

Like...I...want to be...crying? In
front of you? You're such...an
asshole!

KEVIN

Agreed! No, totally, I am, I am--

JANE

What do you want me to say?! That if
someone says "Jane's a saint" one more
time I will beat them senseless with my
bare hands? That if I hear another
Sinatra song I'm going to lay waste to
the entire city?! What?! What do you
want me to say?! You want me to tell my
*kid sister that she's marrying the only
man I've ever really loved and it's
literally killing me?!*

KEVIN

Yeah, it's probably a little late for--

JANE

YEAH, YA THINK?!

Kevin jumps back, scared, okay okay... He quickly REVS the old car to life. Outside, it starts raining...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR -- NIGHT

They speed through a thick rain along a back country road. The mood is very tense. They're clearly lost.

JANE

We are so not in Rhinebeck anymore.

KEVIN

What does that sign say?

They blow by the sign, going way too fast to read it.

JANE

Yeah, sorry, my Spidey Vision isn't working today... Seriously: slow down, we're going to hydroplane.

KEVIN

No we're not--

And the car HYDROPLANES! It instantly goes into a SPIN! Kevin wrestles with the wheel! Jane SCREAMS! Kevin SCREAMS LOUDER!

THE CAR SPINS WILDLY

And then careens off the road into a muddy ditch. A beat.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Don't say anything. Just...not yet.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCAL DIVE BAR -- NIGHT

Rain pours down. Jane and Kevin run into this rural, half-empty dive bar, soaking wet. Kevin goes to the payphone by the door, checks it, then heads over to the BARTENDER.

KEVIN

Phone's dead.

BARTENDER

Yup, on account of the stormin'.

KEVIN

Could I pay you to use your cell?

BARTENDER

My what?

No idea what a "cell" is. Kevin looks at him, deadpan.

KEVIN
Yeah. We're lost.
(he sits)
Scotch, three fingers, no ice.

The Bartender moves off to make his drink.

JANE
What are you doing?

KEVIN
It's 10:30 at night, we can't get a
tow, we're in East Deliverance, New
York, and it's like the Perfect Storm
outside. We're not going anywhere.

Jane clenches her jaw, angry, cornered.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Come on, there's no one you can be
helping right now. Just relax and have
a drink. You've had a tough day.

JANE
Fine. Just one.

CUT TO:

SLAM!

Jane and Kevin SLAM down two empty shotglasses on the bar.
Jane wipes her mouth with the back of her hand. A few empty
shotglasses sit nearby.

JANE
Come on, your job can't be that bad!

KEVIN
Four weddings a week? Rubber salmon at
every meal? And you can't even imagine
the crap I catch from my friends...

Jane laughs, fair enough.

JANE
So why do you do write Vows? The money?

KEVIN
(laughing)
No, it's just a stepping stone to
covering real news.

JANE
But couldn't you be doing that at a
smaller paper by now?

KEVIN
(derisive)
Sure, at like the Akron Daily Bugle.

JANE
Or, like, the Post. Or Newsday.

KEVIN
I guess...

JANE
Ahhhh: so it's not actually about
covering real news, it's about being at
the New York Times...
(studying him, curious)
Who are we trying to impress? Daddy...?
Big brother...? College roommates...?

KEVIN
Oh, please--

Then Jane sits up, realizing:

JANE
Your ex?

Kevin flinches almost imperceptibly; Jane pounces on it.

JANE (CONT'D)
Ahh, is someone not over their ex-wife
just yet?!

He just shakes his head, smiling, unbelievable -- but she's
clearly hit a nerve.

JANE (CONT'D)
You're gonna show her, though, right?
She'll pick up the New York Times
someday, see your name on the front
page, and what? Wish she'd never left
you? Maybe even come crawling back?
What's your fantasy?

KEVIN
(looking down, sincere)
My fantasy is that...someday soon...
you'll stop talking.

She busts out laughing as we

CUT TO:

SLAM!

Kevin and Jane SLAM down two more empty shotglasses. They're getting pretty toasty.

JANE

One thing you like about weddings, go!

KEVIN

Open bar.

JANE

(laughs)

Come on! There's got to be something!

Kevin inhales. Thinks for a second, studying his shotglass.

KEVIN

Well, when the bride makes her big entrance, I like to glance back at the poor bastard getting married. Because even though I think he's an idiot for willingly entering into the last legal form of slavery, he always looks really damn happy, and-- *why are you looking at me like that?*

Jane's jaw is hanging down. She's stunned.

JANE

That's my favorite part too!

She just looks at him, amazed:

JANE (CONT'D)

We have something in common!

KEVIN

Yes, well, statistically it was bound to happen.

JANE

When are you going to admit that you're just a big softie? That the whole cynical thing is just to get chicks to think you're mysterious and wounded?

Kevin laughs, shaking his head, as we

CUT TO:

SLAM!

They shoot another round and SLAM the glasses on the bar. It's later, they're drunker, and the bar is filling up...

JANE
February 12, 2002!

Kevin just looks confused.

JANE (CONT'D)
The Keller wedding, February 12, 2002!
You wrote a column that moved me to
tears. It was downright, flat-out, the
most beautiful thing I've ever read.

KEVIN
Don't remember it...

JANE
You don't remember it?! The one on the
beach when it started raining? Her dad
had died a year to the day before? And
the brother flew back from Afghanistan?
You cannot fake that kind of emotion!
It's just not possible!

KEVIN
Jane, that's what good writers do.

JANE
Kevin, you're not that good a writer.

They laugh.

KEVIN
Sorry, I really don't remember it.

JANE
(shaking her head)
You lie like a rug...

They drink in silence. Then "Bennie and The Jets" starts
playing on the jukebox. Kevin's foot starts tapping...

KEVIN
Great song.

Jane nods, oh, yeah. Her foot starts tapping too...

When the lyrics kick in, they both quietly sing/mumble along.
Only thing is, if you've ever tried to sing the opening of
Bennie and the Jets, it goes something like, "Hey, hee,
shamma with a lem-on." After a few bars, Kevin grins:

KEVIN (CONT'D)
No idea what I'm singing.

JANE
Oh: no idea.

They laugh and start sing/mumbling a little louder. When they hit lyrics they actually know, they SHOUT them:

KEVIN & JANE
Spots hang on...wiggie spacetime...SO
 STICK AROUND! *Something something*
something...SOLID WALLS OF SOUND!

They get more into it; Kevin plays air piano on the bar.

KEVIN & JANE (CONT'D)
Sacken naynay...HAVE YOU SEEN THEM YET?
 OH, BECAUSE THEY'RE SO SPACED OUT!
 (yelling together)
 B-B-B-BENNIE AND THE JETSSSSSS!

CUT TO:

SLAM!

TWO FEET land on the counter. PULL BACK to reveal Jane and Kevin dancing ON THE BAR! They BELT OUT the lyrics:

JANE & KEVIN
 SHE'S GOT ELECTRIC BOOBS, AND MOHAIR
 SHOES! YOU KNOW I READ IT IN THE
 MAGAZINES! B-B-BENNIE AND THE JETS!

They sing the bastardized lyrics and dance like fools until the song winds down. The bar patrons half-heartedly APPLAUD. Jane and Kevin bow, thank you, thank you very much.

Kevin hops down, then takes Jane's hand and helps her down. She lands, and finds herself IN HIS ARMS. They're very close.

A beat. Kevin smiles, looks down, and confesses:

KEVIN
 I got choked up at the Keller wedding.

Jane's jaw drops!

JANE
 I KNEW IT! YOU ARE A BIG SOFTIE! YOU--

Still in his arms, she hits him, struggling, laughing -- and then suddenly he kisses her. It surprises both of them. They freeze...then they start making out like crazy.

SPIN DISSOLVE TO:

JANE AND KEVIN STILL MAKING OUT LIKE CRAZY

in his car, soaking wet, pulling off clothing. It's getting increasingly passionate.

Then the passenger seat suddenly gives way and goes horizontal. They drop out of frame. Beat. HONNNNNNK! The car's horn sounds. As they laugh, we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR -- SUNRISE

A sunny morning. Jane is asleep in the passenger seat under Kevin's jacket. The car door OPENS. She jerks awake.

JANE
What the fu--?

KEVIN
(faux chipper)
Mornin', sunshine.

He gets in and hands her a coffee. She takes it, squinting.

JANE
What is going on here...?

He smiles, closes his door.

KEVIN
Tow truck is on the way.

JANE
What did we do last night?

KEVIN
Everything I could think of, plus a couple things you brought to the table.

Jane winces. Awkward silence. They sip their coffees.

JANE
I never do this.

KEVIN
I know.

JANE
No really. I never do this.

KEVIN
I know. You kept saying that over and over again last night. I never do this, I never do this...

JANE
Well, I don't. I'm a good girl. A good, respectable, dignified girl...
(awkward beat)
(MORE)

JANE (cont'd)
 Can you, um, hand me...my panties?
 They're hanging from the blinker.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER -- DAY

A WAITRESS brings Kevin and Jane their breakfasts at their booth. They both look hungover, but happy. They dig in. Just then, a DUDE FROM THE BAR last night passes by.

DUDE FROM BAR
 HEY! IT'S B-B-BENNIE AND THE JETS!

Jane smiles, sheepishly waves, hey. After the guy passes, she turns to Kevin, horrified:

JANE
I sang Bennie and the Jets?!

Kevin nods. Jane cringes.

JANE (CONT'D)
 Well, at least it wasn't in front of a
New York Times reporter or anything...

Kevin laughs. They sit there in silence, just two people comfortable enough to enjoy each other's company without talking. Jane smiles. Kevin smiles back. Then another WAITRESS walks up.

WAITRESS
 Hey, aren't you the girl?

JANE
 Yeah, yeah, I'm Bennie, the Jets are
 sleeping it off on the bus...

WAITRESS
 No, you're the girl from the paper.

The Waitress grabs a New York Times from the counter and hands it to Jane. It's open to the Vows section. Jane sees her picture, reads the headline:

JANE
 "Always, Always, Always a Bridesmaid?"
 By Malcolm Doyle?

KEVIN
 Oh no--

Kevin tries to grab the paper, but Jane pulls it away and continues to read, her face turning to horror...

SMASH CUT TO:

JANE STORMING OUT OF THE DINER

She's absolutely furious. Kevin is right behind her.

KEVIN

Look, I didn't want it to run, my editor must've--!

She spins and SLAPS HIM ACROSS THE FACE! He freezes, stunned. She gasps, equally surprised by her violence. Then she turns and steams off down the sidewalk.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

No one reads that section anyway!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEW YORK STREET -- DAY

Back in the city, Jane hurries towards her apartment, head down. She passes SUZANNE, one of the brides from earlier.

SUZANNE

Jane?

JANE

Oh my God, Suzanne, hi---!

SUZANNE

You were in Shari's wedding the same night as MINE?!

JANE

I didn't want to let anyone down!

Suzanne gestures, talk to the hand, and storms off, furious.

EXT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Jane hurries towards her building, trying to avoid eye contact with passersby. Her DOORMAN is there.

DOORMAN

Just FYI, I don't think you have a "bridesmaid addiction so large it requires its own twelve step program."

JANE

Thanks a bunch, Charlie.

Looking miserable, she slinks inside.

DOORMAN

Don't worry, honey, no one reads that section anyway!

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Jane enters her apartment and exhales. Sanctuary. Then Tess rounds the corner, waving the article, full of fury:

TESS
How could you let this happen?!

JANE
What? Do you think I wanted this?

TESS
"If Jane is the typical accommodating bridesmaid, then her sister Tess is perfectly cast as the overbearing and over-indulged bride, where at any moment one worries she may start stomping around Manhattan, breathing fire and swatting planes from the sky."

JANE
I'm so sorry, Tess. I had no idea that's what he was writing.

TESS
He's basically calling me bridezilla! In the New York frickin Times!

The phone rings. Tess picks it up and ROARS INTO IT:

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
WHAAAT?!!

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Kevin walks along the street, on his cellphone, concerned.

KEVIN
Can I speak to Jane please.

TESS (O.S.)
THE ONLY PERSON YOU'RE GOING TO BE SPEAKING TO IS MY ATTORNEY, BUDDY!

BACK IN THE APARTMENT

Tess SLAMS DOWN the phone, TOPPLING the end table, which only makes her madder. She THROWS the Styles section against the wall and KICKS OVER a chair!

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
BRIDEZILLA?! I COULD KILL HIM!

Tess stops, panting, looks at the destruction.

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Yes, I do grasp the irony. I do.

JANE
Tess, really, no one reads that section-

TESS
I've gotta get out of here.
(gathering her things)
BETTER INFORM AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL! THE
PLANES AREN'T SAFE!

SLAM! She exits. Jane slumps. The phone RINGS again. She simply lifts up the handpiece and hangs it up again.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Jane hurries into work past Dawn, trying not to be seen.

DAWN
Jane, I just want you to know that I
don't think you're...
(reading from paper)
"a pawn of the emotionally facist
wedding industry, which coerces young
brides to spend more on one day than it
would take to feed an African village
for a year."

JANE
Your support means so much, Dawn.

DAWN
Don't worry, no one--

JANE
--reads that section anyway. I know.

NANCY appears, clueless, clearly not having read the article.

NANCY
Reads what section?

JANE
Are you serious?

NANCY
Yeah. What's up?

Beat. Then Jane just hugs her tightly. Nancy looks confused.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK TIMES BUILDING -- DAY

Kevin walks into work, haggard, unshaven, angry. Dave points at him from his sports memorabilia-covered cubicle.

DAVE

Great article, dude! You're a gangster!

Kevin just frowns and walks on past him.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Not that...I ever...read that section!
Someone just, um, showed it to me...

Kevin rounds the corner and falls in with a smiling Maureen.

MAUREEN

Congratulations.

KEVIN

What happened?! Why did you run it?!

MAUREEN

(taken aback)

We had an emergency, I didn't have anything else to go with.

KEVIN

But I didn't get to tell Jane that it was running! I totally ambushed her. And she's pissed.

MAUREEN

So? Since when do you care?

Kevin opens his mouth to respond. But it's a fair point.

MAUREEN (CONT'D)

Look, I just gave you 22 inches in the Sunday New York Times. I was expecting flowers, not complaints.

Maureen glares at him. But Kevin doesn't back down.

KEVIN

You shouldn't have run it.

Kevin wheels and angrily makes for the exit.

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE -- DAY

Jane slips in with a morning coffee for George. She looks worried, expecting him to be furious.

JANE

I just wanted to say how sorry I was.

GEORGE

Oh no, it wasn't you, it was that
slimeball, Doyle. He blindsided us.
God, even this show doesn't nail people
like that anymore. Really, totally not
your fault.

Jane nods, impressed, once again remembering why she likes
George so much.

JANE

Thank you, George. That means...more
than you know.

She smiles, really touched, then exits...

INT. OFFICE -- JANE'S DESK -- CONTINUOUS

Jane returns to find KEVIN waiting there, anxious. Her warm
fuzzy feeling vanishes. Kevin quickly moves to her.

KEVIN

(quietly)

Hey, I just wanted to say I was sorry
in person. My editor lied to me and--

JANE

(loud)

Oh please, you used me to advance your
career, just be a man and admit it!
Don't pretend to care about me!

Several co-workers, Nancy included, look over. Kevin sees
them and pulls Jane into the quiet COFFEE NOOK.

KEVIN

Look, I'm sorry. I swear, I didn't want
that article to come out like it did.

JANE

Wait, so are you apologizing for what
you said? Or just how you said it?!

Kevin's head spins, a little confused.

KEVIN

I guess...I don't know...

JANE

This has got to be the crappiest
apology I have ever received!

KEVIN

Well, do you disagree with what the article said?

Jane looks shocked that he's returning fire.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I mean, tell me where it was wrong, Jane, and I'll apologize. Are you not obsessed with being nice? With being liked? And don't give me that line about how making other people happy makes you happy. Because it doesn't. It just makes you busy.

Jane inhales, as if punched.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

There's a reason you're never the bride and always a bridesmaid, Jane. And that's because it's easy. You don't have to tell people how you feel, you don't have to offend anyone, you don't have to make hard choices or step into the spotlight and risk failure, you just get to stand on the side and be a saint. It's easy... and it's safe.

JANE

Oh, so now I'm a coward, too?! Who taught you how to apologize, Dick Cheney?!

KEVIN

If you really want to be happy, Jane, you've got to stop being a bridesmaid, and just be a bride. Make that choice.

JANE

"Be a bride?!" Only a guy would say something so goddamned stupid!

Kevin looks like fine, whatever, and storms out of the coffee nook. Jane stands there, seething, as angry as we've ever seen her... Then Nancy rounds the corner:

NANCY

So how'd it g--?

She sees Jane's face and immediately wheels right back out.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGEWATERS RESTAURANT -- DAY

Bridgewaters is an upscale, 17th floor restaurant with stunning views of the city and the river. Jane blows in, still smarting. She almost collides with Tess, who's waiting in the foyer with a clipboard. The mood is frosty.

TESS

So I've thought about the whole article fiasco, and I've decided to forgive you. We're family, right?

Tess forces a smile and checks something off her clipboard.

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Okay, next: I need you to go to the florist and inspect the orchids, then I need you to call the limo company and--

(off Jane's look)

Oh I'm sorry, am I being Bridezilla? You gonna call in Mothra to kick my ass?

JANE

(heated)

Tess: get over yourself. Just...what else do you need me to do?

Tess looks taken aback by Jane's intensity.

TESS

What's come over you, bee-atch?

JANE

(exhaling)

Nothing. Sorry. I'm sorry.

TESS

Actually, the only thing I really need you to do right now is pick up Gatsby.

JANE

Pick him up? Where is he?

TESS

Oh, George asked me to watch him while his family was in town, but that dog's stank-breath was more than I could handle, so I had Pedro take him to a doggie day care place.

JANE

You had Pedro--?

TESS

Yes, he's been such a help during this whole process.

JANE

Tess. He's like family to George.

TESS

Well, with family like that, who needs a personal assistant? Honestly, I'm thinking of getting one myself.

(Jane looks horrified)

I'm kidding.

(Jane calms)

Sort of...

JANE

Look, just...where's Gatsby?

TESS

Some place on 3rd and 72nd.

JANE

3rd and 72nd...? There's no--

Then all the blood drains from Jane's face.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Jane and Tess race down the street. On the corner of 3rd and 72nd is a building marked "Westside Animal Shelter."

INT. SHELTER -- DAY

A WORKER looks at Tess and Jane; they're out of breath.

WORKER

What kind of dog was it?

TESS

(no idea)

Brownish? Kind of dopey-looking--?

JANE

He's a chocolate labrador mix, about 100 pounds, with one white eyebrow.

The WORKER sits up, uh-oh...

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

GATSBY is slowly led down a dark hallway towards a steel door labelled ELIMINATION. His paws click-click-click on the cold hallway floor. It's all very Dead Dog Walking...

Just then, Jane whips around the corner at top speed, sees Gatsby, and starts yelling.

JANE
No! Stop that dog!

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Jane and Tess exit with Gatsby. Jane looks furious with Tess.

JANE
You left him at an animal shelter?
What were you thinking?

TESS
OK. Fine. The doggie day care was
booked up.

JANE
They were about to put him to sleep!

TESS
But he was there less than 24 hours!
The sign on the door said "shelter" --
not "Doggie Death Camp!"

Jane has just enough patience left to reign herself in.

JANE
Let's...let's just get Gatsby home.

INT. GEORGE'S APARTMENT -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jane and Tess enter the apartment and unleash Gatsby, who sprints under the couch, WHIMPERING. Tess turns to Jane.

TESS
There, see? He's happy. Now let's go,
we're late for the florist--

JANE
Wait...

Jane hears a WHISTLING coming from the back bedroom.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
...What's that sound?

TESS
Nothing! Come on--

Tess tries to usher her out, but Jane is already pushing past her, heading for the bedroom.

INT. GEORGE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jane walks in to find PEDRO whistling as he vacuums the carpet. Jane's jaw drops. Tess hurries in.

TESS
It's not what you think! He said he needed a part time job, so I hired him.

PEDRO
(raising fist)
The next generation of Hispanic domestics begins today!

Jane groans, oh god.

TESS
(defensive)
I provided Pedro with an honest day's work at an extremely high wage. Instead of yelling at me, you should be voting for me.

JANE
(horrified)
Pedro, go home.

PEDRO
But--

JANE
Now.

Pedro walks out, gesturing to Tess, call me.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
It's over.

TESS
What are you talking about?

JANE
(angry, resolute)
You're done lying to George.

Tess looks thrown by Jane's new aggressive behavior.

TESS
What is going on with you today?!

JANE
Gatsby and Pedro are sacred to George. To say nothing of the fact that he thinks he's marrying an outdoorsy vegetarian. No. The lies stop now. It's not fair to him.

TESS
Oh really? Or what?

JANE
Or I'm going to tell him everything.

TESS
Oh, please. You're a "saint," remember? Saints don't go around ruining weddings.

JANE
You know what, Tess? You've spent your whole life getting away with everything. Not helping around the house, not ever being at the store, coasting all through school. But not this time. This is too important. This is a wedding. This is marriage.

TESS
(furious)
You don't have to lecture me on how important this is, Jane. Marrying George is everything I ever wanted. And if I had to make up a few lies to get there, well, good for me. Love is complicated and no one's perfect and it's not just some big fairy tale you've read about in some article!

JANE
What?!

TESS
What do you know, Jane? Your last serious relationship ended when he took someone else to the Senior Prom!

Jane is stung.

JANE
(weakly)
That's not true, there was David Hoffman in my sophomore year of coll...

TESS
...The fact that George thinks I'm an outdoorsy vegetarian and I almost killed his dog means nothing. Nothing. So why don't you just get off your high horse and go back to being my bridesmaid!

Jane is furious, but speechless. Just as she's about to storm out of the apartment, Jane blurts out:

JANE
David Hoffman and I were very serious.
VERY.

Jane leaves, slamming the door behind her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Jane is at her desk -- looking somewhat possessed. She is busy scanning photographs and downloading things onto her computer. Nancy stands next to her, looking extremely worried.

NANCY
You're not seriously going through with this, are you?

JANE
(on a mission)
Tess doesn't even love him. She doesn't respect him or anything he values.
(beat) That bitch is going down.

Nancy looks at the new Jane. She's horrified -- and slightly impressed.

INT. BRIDGEWATERS RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

The 17th floor restaurant is decked out for the rehearsal dinner. Little white lights. Stunning flower arrangements. And of course, the nighttime view of the city and the river.

Dressed to the nines, Jane hurries in, looking slightly mad, holding her laptop close to her side. Robin approaches with Hal.

ROBIN
Hey, Jane. Nice dress. Your boobs almost look...

JANE
Stick it up your ass, Robin.

Jane keeps walking. An elderly Aunt approaches.

AUNT JEAN
Jane, look how nice you look! It must be so hard for you to watch your younger sister get married before you!

JANE

It is, but then I remember I still get to have crazy monkey-sex with random strangers, and I feel a lot better. Gotta go.

Jane moves on. Nancy appears holding a cocktail.

NANCY

You still have time to change your mind, you know.

JANE

Yep. And so does Tess...

Jane grabs Nancy's drink and downs it. Nancy looks very worried. Jane walks towards a table and puts the laptop on it. Jane approaches Tess and George, who both look radiant as always. They're talking playfully. Jane slows.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Hey, guys.

Tess and Jane lock eyes.

GEORGE

Hey. It all looks beautiful, Jane. Another great job. Thank you.

Jane, without taking her eyes off her sister, flags down a passing waiter...takes his hors d'oeuvres tray.

JANE

Mmm, dates wrapped in bacon. Tess, would you like some?

Tess looks at her. The moment of truth.

TESS

Meat is murder, Jane.

JANE

Right. Just checking. See you later, 'kay?

Jane heads off. Tess swallows, a little worried...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRIDGEWATERS RESTAURANT -- LATER

The rehearsal dinner is going swimmingly. Everyone sits at their tables, eating happily. Then Jane stands and CLINKS her wineglass, getting everyone's attention.

JANE
 (charmingly)
 Hi, everybody. In case you hadn't
 heard, I've been to my share of
 weddings lately.

That gets a few laughs. The party quiets down.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 So, I guess it's safe to say, I know a
 great couple when I see one.

Some more titters.

JANE (cont'd)
 And Tess and George -- are a perfect
 couple. No, a divine couple. A couple
 whose love is the stuff of myths. Whose
 compatibility is so exact, that it can
 only be described as having been
 designed by the Gods themselves.

Tess and George beam at each other.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 But, as they say, a picture is worth a
 thousand words, so if you don't believe
 me -- I made a little slide show so you
 can see for yourself!

Jane presses play on a boom box. Something extremely ersatz
 and cheesy pours out. Something very Peabo Bryson.

The lights are dimmed.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 From the very beginning, Tess and
 George looked like they were destined
 for each other.

A baby picture comes up of TESS. Beautiful and angelic. Then
 a fancy dissolve to a photo of GEORGE, a handsome, impish,
 little boy...Everyone AWWWS...

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 First of all, George and Tess shared a
 love of all God's furry creatures...

A PHOTO OF GEORGE appears

8 years old, petting a lamb at a petting zoo. More AWWWS.

A PHOTO OF TESS swirls onto the screen

7 years old, holding a cat upside down by his tail, laughing
 demonically.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Sort of. And as they grew up, they both shared the same level of dedication and commitment towards their education and civic responsibility.

A PHOTO OF GEORGE

in high school, speaking as President of the Student Council.

THEN A SPLIT SCREEN OF TESS

in high school, as a cheerleader with her tongue in the ear of a football player. The audience laughs.

A PHOTO OF GEORGE

in college, working at a soup kitchen.

A PHOTO OF TESS

in college at her sorority's Toga party, wearing a very skimpy Toga, with her tongue in the ear of a very hot blonde guy. Everyone laughs.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
It was international affairs. He was an exchange student from Croatia.

Tess pretends to laugh along, but shoots daggers at Jane. Nancy is shocked and amused.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
And today, Tess and George still share the same values --

PHOTO OF GEORGE

Outside at an Organic Market, wearing a t-shirt that says "Vegetarians are better lovers."

PHOTO OF TESS

A recent one. Tess, wearing a bib at Tony Roma's, gnawing on ribs, meat juices dribbling down her chin.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
If not the same restaurants.

Everyone laughs again. Tess covers her face.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But nevertheless, their love is based on a deep understanding and acceptance of who each other really is...

PHOTO OF GEORGE

In hiking gear on top of a snow-capped mountain.

ANOTHER PHOTO OF TESS

In front of Tiffany's, pretending to be Audrey Hepburn.

PHOTO OF GEORGE

smiling at the camera with his arm around his Mom and Dad.

PHOTO OF TESS

Screaming at Hal and Jane, who cower away from her.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
And what they're about to get into.

ANOTHER PHOTO OF TESS

Partying at a nightclub, with European male models, drinking champagne.

ANOTHER PHOTO OF TESS

Scowling as she holds someone's crying baby far away from her.

ANOTHER PHOTO OF TESS

Making a face, as Gatsby jumps on her.

ANGLE ON George's face, looking very upset and confused. Everyone is quiet now. The lights come on. Jane lifts her glass.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(drunkenly)
So to my darling sister Tess, -- you said marrying George was everything you ever wanted, and it didn't matter what you had to do to get him -- so -- ta da! You did it!!! I'm so proud of you my sister!

Jane drunkenly pounds her fist to her chest and raises it in the air. A CLOSE-UP on HAL's face, deeply disturbed by everything that he's just seen.

JANE (cont'd)
And now, to keep the merriment going, George's "little brother" Pedro, would like to say a few words.

George turns to Tess, trying to digest everything he's just seen.

GEORGE

So, um, you're not a vegetarian?

TESS

That picture was taken a long time ago.

GEORGE

Then why were you wearing your engagement ring in it...?

Tess stammers as a CATERER comes over to clear their plates. He looks at Tess.

CATERER

Oh my God.

She looks at him, thrown, who are you?

CATERER (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Larry? I work at the 73rd street shelter? I moonlight as a caterer.

TESS

(under her breath)

Uh ohhh...

LARRY (CATERER)

I'm so glad you decided not to destroy Gatsby. He seemed like such a nice dog.

GEORGE

Wait, what?!

TESS

George, honey, I'm thirsty, would you mind getting me a--?

Larry fills up her water glass. She winces, damn.

GEORGE

What is he talking about, Tess? Did... Did you try to kill my dog?!

TESS

No!

(beat)

Technically, it was Pedro's fault--

George looks overwhelmed by this blitzkrieg of bad news. PEDRO is now in standing front of everyone.

PEDRO

Hi. I'm Pedro, and George has been my Big Brother for the last three years. He is the best and I love him.

Everyone smiles dotingly at him.

PEDRO (CONT'D) (cont'd)

And now he has Tess, who I think is really cool because she's helping me start my own cleaning business.

Everyone inhales sharply, what?!

PEDRO (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I'm only cleaning George's apartment right now, but if anyone's in the market for a reliable, courteous, fully bonded home-cleaning service, I have some great introductory packages, please see me in the lobby after...

George stands and takes Tess firmly by the arm.

GEORGE

Can I talk to you outside please.

He quickly guides her to the exit.

EXT. PATIO -- CONTINUOUS

George hurries Tess onto the patio overlooking the city.

GEORGE

Let me get this straight. You're not any of the things you said you were, you almost killed my dog, and you made Pedro clean my apartment--?!

TESS

--and paid him handsomely, and paid him handsomely.

George just glares at her. She concedes. Sort of:

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Okay. Yes. Mistakes were made.

GEORGE

Mistakes? Tess, you lied to me. Lies about who you are, things you've done, your values...

TESS

I just... I love you, George. And I wanted you to love me too.

(MORE)

TESS (cont'd)
 So I...spun a little. Please baby,
 let's not do anything dramatic, okay?

Tess looks at George, a little desperate.

INT. BRIDGEWATERS RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Guests talk quietly in their seats, murmuring about what's going on. Jane is now hiding in a corner, drinking. The caterer and Pedro walk up to her. Jane sees them, goes into her purse, and hands them both a fifty. She watches sadly as they walk away. Hal walks up to her, looking -- heartbroken.

HAL
 Jane...I don't know what to say...

JANE
 (sadly)
 I guess I'm not such a saint after all,
 am I, daddy?

Jane walks away, just in time to bump into Tess.

TESS
How could you do this to me!? The wedding's off! Are you happy now? You are a heartless, vicious, despicable person. I am never talking to you ever again.

Awash in tears, Tess rushes out the door.

The guests GASP, stunned. Hal just looks at his daughter like she's a complete stranger. Then he turns his back on her and walks off.

Her head down, ashamed, Jane steps onto the empty patio, and stares out at the city. Realizing what she's done, she quietly starts crying. She has never felt worse...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BRIDGEWATERS -- NIGHT

Jane drags herself out of the restaurant, depressed. The street is dark and empty. Someone is sitting on the step, waiting. It's KEVIN, and he's holding something large.

JANE
 What are you doing here?

KEVIN
 You haven't been returning my calls and I knew you'd be here. I wanted to apologize-- properly this time. And nothing says "I'm sorry" like...

He hands her what he's holding:

JANE
...a duck-shaped umbrella holder.

KEVIN
A duck-shaped umbrella holder.

She smiles slightly and takes it. A gentle silence.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I saw what happened.

JANE
(mortified)
Inside?

He nods. Jane looks at him.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(attempting a joke)
What? Was I too much?

Kevin just smiles at her.

KEVIN
Perhaps just a little.

Jane is mortified; sad.

JANE
I don't know what happened. I was just
so intent on getting back at Tess, of
proving something to -- someone -- that
I kind of -- lost my mind.

Kevin thinks for a moment.

KEVIN
(gently)
You mean you wanted something so badly
that you lost sight of what it might do
to the people around you?

Jane gets his meaning.

JANE
(gently)
Something like that.

Kevin smiles at Jane.

KEVIN
(softly)
Well. Now, we have one more thing in
common.

They look into each other's eyes. A moment. Kevin gets uncomfortable and looks away.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
And on the bright side, George is
available now, right?

Jane gasps. Her goodwill instantly vanishes; she stares at him, speechless.

KEVIN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
What? No! I'm sorry! Can I take that
back? Free take-backs? No--?

Jane angrily gives him the umbrella holder back and hurries off into the night. Kevin slumps, dammit...

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Jane comes home; her apartment is covered in (appropriately) wilted lilies. She looks at them for a while, guilty...

Then she walks into her bedroom and quietly closes the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HAL'S HARDWARE -- DAY

A very unhappy Tess walks into the store. Just then, Hal appears down the aisle and looks at Tess.

TESS
I don't know what the possible
emergency could be, Daddy, today of all
days.

Hal looks towards the door. Tess looks up to see Jane walk in.

TESS (cont'd)
No. No way!

Jane reluctantly walks in.

HAL
Tessie, Jane has something to say.

JANE
(ashamed)
I do. Tess, I'm so sorry...

Tess is ready to pounce.

TESS
(interrupting)
Sorry? Sorry?
(MORE)

TESS (cont'd)
 You humiliated me in front of my
 friends and family. You ruined my life!

She picks up bags of mop heads, cans of Comet, and starts
 throwing them at Jane, each to accentuate a point.

TESS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 You were always jealous of me.
 Always...My clothes, my looks, my
boyfriends. You were just waiting for
 the chance to tear me down!

HAL
 Tess, honey, this wasn't what I had - !

A giant paint roller smacks Jane in the head.

JANE
 (baited, getting pissed)
 Ow! Oh, so, again, you're not going to
 take any responsibility...OW...!

Tess keeps throwing things. Jane dodges flying objects as she
 goes up to Tess to stop her. She grabs Tess' hands. They
 are wrestling over a can of bug spray.

JANE (cont'd)
 ...for the fact that you lied to
George! You manipulated him and tricked
him! Drop the bug spray! DROP THE BUG
 SPRAY!

They start full out wrestling.

TESS
 Don't you dare touch me! Get away from
 me!!!

Tess pushes Jane into some paint cans.

JANE
 OW!!!

Jane shoves Tess back, pushing her into an entirely different
 area of the store. Some customers are scattering, some are
 watching, enthralled. Hal goes up to them to pull them
 apart.

HAL
 Now girls, stop it...
 (to some customers,
 gruffly)
 What, you haven't seen an argument
 before?

The girls get out of his hold. A couple of paint rollers fall
 on his head. Two customers scurry away.

JANE

You know I couldn't let you marry
George! You never loved him, admit it!

They have now fallen into a ladder, making it crash onto the
floor. Boxes of nails are spilling out everywhere.

TESS

Oh, like you're so noble. So selfless.
Why don't you admit that you've always
resented me! That you hated having to
take care of me after mom died!

Hal looks surprised to hear that. They continue to wrestle.

HAL

What?

JANE

What?

For a moment, Tess has Jane pinned against a wall.

TESS

Yes, you did! You were older and more
responsible and I took advantage of you
and you were too much of a wuss to ever
say anything!

Jane breaks free and they start wrestling again.

JANE

Okay! Fine! Maybe I did resent you a
little, okay? Going out, having fun
while I sat at home with Dad. You
always looked like you never had a care
in the world! Even now, everything
comes so easy to you! Even George!

Tess pins Jane against the wall again.

TESS

(blurting out, tearful)

Are you crazy?! You know the real
reason why I decided to stay in New
York? Because Roberto fired me and I'd
dated every man in the European Union!
George was the first man in a long
time, maybe ever, who acted like he
even liked me!

Jane looks stunned. She lets Tess go.

TESS (CONT'D)

And maybe I didn't love him. Okay? But
I did want him to love me.

(MORE)

TESS (CONT'D)

So I tried to be someone else. Someone who deserved him. Someone he could respect. Someone everyone loved.

(beat)

I tried to be you, Jane.

(beat)

Well...like a cool, well-dressed you.

Tess pats down her hair and brushes off her skirt.

JANE

(stunned)

Why would you want to be me -- when you get to be you?

Hal, holding a can of something, blurts out:

HAL

Jeez. I never knew paint thinner had an expiration date. I was supposed to stop selling this in 1989.

The girls just look at him like he's crazy.

HAL (cont'd)

(looking around the store)

Well, I guess maybe it is time for a change, fix up the store a bit. Time to stop living in the past and move into the future, don't you think?

Hal looks at his daughters, pointedly. Both the girls look sheepish.

JANE

(to Tess)

Are we okay?

TESS

(overly-serious)

Of course. Sisters are forever, Jane.

Jane laughs and gives Tess a hug. The girls come in and hug him. Hal gets a little teary, but then says...

HAL

Now. Will someone please tell me what the hell a scone is?

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE -- DAY

Looking a good deal happier, Jane strides into work in a cute skirt, her hair done, wearing a bit more make-up up than usual. Dawn notices.

DAWN

Whoa, you look hot-nasty!

Jane nods, thanks...I think?

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE -- DAY

George sits at his desk, busily working. Jane enters, carrying a stack of folders. She hesitates, but then speaks.

JANE

Hi, George. Look, I'm so sorry about--

GEORGE

Can we please go back to about six months ago, when I had no personal life and we didn't talk about our feelings?

JANE

Absolutely.

Jane is about to slip out the door when she turns and drops her folders all over the floor. PAPERS and PHOTOS fly everywhere.

JANE (CONT'D)

Dammit.

She hurriedly starts gathering everything. George snaps out of his trance, and is about to help her -- when Jane freezes.

She's looking at a photo of a RUSSIAN PALACE labelled "Minkov Estate, Pavlovsk, Russia." *It looks exactly like the palace cake she saw Antoine making earlier...*

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE PRODUCER'S OFFICE -- DAY

The STAFF is in the middle of another segment meeting. Richard Neil is about to shoot down an idea when Jane hurries in, determined. George follows her in, still a bit lost.

JANE

I can get proof that Walter Minkov is alive and in the country.

Everyone turns and looks at her. Jane practically gulps.

RICHARD NEIL

So get it.

JANE

Only if I get to produce the story with George. With full credit on the scroll.

The air is literally sucked out of the room.

RICHARD NEIL

I'm sorry, did I fall asleep only to wake up in a time where assistants rule the earth? (beat) Please sit down.

Jane feels everyone's eyes on her...but she stays standing.

JANE

I most certainly will not. I'm smart and talented and hard-working and I will not sit down or shut up until you give me my shot.

Like a tennis match, everyone turns to Richard. He reddens, irate that his authority is being questioned.

RICHARD NEIL

Dear girl, no one tells me what to do! Ever!

JANE

...except for this one time, because I know where Walter Minkov is. And that's why you're going to let me produce the damn story.

Richard stammers, cornered. He glances at George.

RICHARD NEIL

Well...are you okay with this, George?

GEORGE

(amused)

Yeah. I think it's *adorable*.

Richard scowls. He glares at Jane. No one breathes...

RICHARD NEIL

Fine. You get me footage of Minkov alive and in New York, your Aunt Sally can produce the piece.

JANE

...and then after that a full promotion to segment producer. With my own assistant.

Richard raises his eyebrows, about to blow his top.

JANE (cont'd)

(to George)

Was that one step too far?

GEORGE
(nodding)

Yep.

JANE
(shrugging)
I took a shot. (beat) Gotta go!

She quickly hurries out with George before Richard can change his mind.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RUSSIAN BANQUET HALL -- NIGHT

Jane and George step out of a cab in Brighton Beach. He's still fairly glum, but looking sharp in a tuxedo. The usually cute Jane now looks dead sexy in a tight, low-cut dress and heels. They make a very attractive couple...

While Jane stops and straightens his tie, George eyes a line of SHADY RUSSIAN MEN and WOMEN are getting patted down before entering a reception hall.

GEORGE
You sure Minkov will be here?

JANE
Antoine confirmed that the cake was for his daughter. And no father, gangster or otherwise, misses his daughter's wedding.

George nods, then they quickly walk around

TO THE BACK OF THE RECEPTION HALL

Jane knocks on the rear entrance. ANTOINE opens the door.

ANTOINE
I could be killed for this!

Jane grins, gives him a peck on the cheek.

JANE
I know, isn't it exciting!

INT. RUSSIAN WEDDING -- NIGHT

Jane and George slip out of the kitchen. A HUGE RUSSIAN BODYGUARD stops them. He speaks in Russian:

RUSSIAN BODYGUARD
What are you doing here?

George freezes, terrified. Jane, however, just smiles, completely calm, and says in perfect Russian:

JANE

The food here is delicious. Now, I must give my respect to the beautiful bride.

The bodyguard lets them go. As they walk off, George looks at Jane, amazed, the rush of their sting perking him up...

GEORGE

You speak Russian?!

JANE

No, I speak Russian Wedding. I was a bridesmaid in my friend Svetlana's wedding last June. Her parents didn't speak a word of English.

George looks impressed. They enter into a boisterous Russian wedding. A few guests even do the knee-bend dance. George and Jane hover by the hors d'oeuvres table, checking it out.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Minkov will be entering over there.

GEORGE

And...how do you know this?

JANE

Let's just say that the Russian mob isn't the only underground organization here tonight.

Just then, BOBBY THE WAITER comes up to them. Jane whispers:

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

What've you got for me, Bobby?

BOBBY THE WAITER

Dogbite says Minkov is two blocks away.

JANE

Thanks -- and tell Nico the quiche needs more paprika.

He nods and speeds off. Again George looks amazed.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Big Top Catering: good people.

GEORGE

Who's Dogbite?

JANE
Limo driver. I've given him a lot of
business this year.

George shakes his head, even more impressed.

GEORGE
So once we see Minkov, how are we--?

JANE
(patting her purse)
Bag-cam.

GEORGE
I don't even know why I'm here.

JANE
I've been saying that for years.

George LAUGHS for the first time in days. He takes another
look at Jane, seeing her in a whole new light...

GEORGE
Can I get you a drink?

And this time, Jane answers correctly:

JANE
Yeah, thanks...vodka soda.

INT. RUSSIAN WEDDING -- LATER

Jane and George are at the buffet table, sipping their
drinks. George tries what looks like a cream puff. He almost
doubles over.

JANE
Yeah. That's boiled intestine. Don't
blow our cover when you spit it out.

George tries to casually spit the disgusting appetizer into
his napkin. It doesn't end up looking very casual.

JANE (CONT'D)
Wait. Is that him?

He follows her gaze across the dance floor to a barrel-
chested man in a shiny suit, surrounded by bodyguards.

GEORGE
Bingo.

MINKOV kisses his daughter, the BRIDE, on the cheek. Just
then, the highly-moussed Russian singer in the band starts
crooning Frank Sinatra's "Luck be a Lady" -- in Russian.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Let's dance.

JANE
What?

GEORGE
Come on. Get your bag-cam ready.

They step onto the dance floor, and start slowly dancing towards Minkov.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Okay, we have to really sell this. Get nice and close. Look into my eyes.

JANE
O-Okay.

She happily does as told. They look straight into each other's eyes, swaying gently to the Sinatra...

JANE (CONT'D)
So. You doing okay?

George shrugs, enh.

GEORGE
I think on some level I knew all along Tess wasn't being up-front with me. But I wanted to believe, you know?

JANE
Yeah, I know all about that.

He smiles at her. Jane's heart is in her throat.

JANE (CONT'D)
I-Is my bag pointed right? Do you think I'm getting him?

GEORGE
Wait.

He gently steers her by her waist, pulling her tight, angling her in the right direction. As her bag-cam videotapes Minkov, they dance cheek to cheek...intimately close.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
How's that?

Jane closes her eyes, inhales the moment.

JANE
Perfect...

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

George and JANE burst out of the reception hall, laughing.

GEORGE
Holy shit!

JANE
We did it!

She laughs, free, uninhibited.

GEORGE
You were amazing.

JANE
Aw, shucks, boss.

GEORGE
Former boss.

JANE
Right! Right...

He moves closer to her. They're breathing hard, excited.

GEORGE
What happened to you, Jane?
(studying her)
You used to be, I don't know, sort of
on the sidelines, you know? But now you
seem so much more confident, so much
stronger-- and thank god you don't wear
dresses like that around the office,
because no one would get anything done.

Jane grins, flattered. They gaze into each other's eyes,
inches apart...

This is the moment she's always dreamed of... George leans in
and it happens...they kiss.

They break apart. Jane just looks at George, processing what
just happened, blankly. Unmoved.

JANE
Wow. Nothin'. Didn't feel a thing.

GEORGE
Ouch. Do you want me to try again?

JANE
Um. Kinda.

They kiss again.

JANE (cont'd)
Yeah. No. Wow. Tess was right.

GEORGE
What does Tess have to do with this?

JANE
She said that I have this fairy tale image of love and relationships. And I do. And it just so happened that for the past three years my Prince Charming was you.

GEORGE
What?

JANE
Oh yeah. Crazy crush. Three years. So many journals. You have no idea.

And then, from inside the reception hall, we hear the opening chords of "Bennie and the Jets." Then, a singer, begins to sing the song -- with a thick Russian accent.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But it was just a fantasy.

Something is starting to dawn on Jane.

JANE (cont'd)
And real love is more complicated than that. And people aren't perfect.

George looks at her, slightly confused. "Bennie and the Jets" seems to get louder as Jane has a complete revelation.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
(excited)
And now there's one incredibly imperfect person I have to go see now.

George smiles -- he's cool.

GEORGE
Then what are you waiting for?

Jane smiles and starts walking away.

HER WALK BECOMES A RUN

A silly grin crosses her face. She darts into traffic, puts two fingers in her mouth and WHISTLES LOUDLY. A cab immediately pulls up. Jane hops in.

JANE
The New York Times Building.

INT. TAXI -- NIGHT

Jane speeds over the Manhattan Bridge.

INT. NEW YORK TIMES -- NIGHT

Jane hurries in, out of breath. DAVE notices her.

DAVE
Hey, aren't you the bridesmaid?!

JANE
Yes, I'm looking for Kevin Doyle.

Dave hesitates, assuming she's still irate about the article.

DAVE
Are...are you going to kill him?

JANE
I'll try not to.

Dave thinks for a second, then shrugs.

DAVE
Good enough for me. He's covering a
wedding down at South Street Seaport.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCK -- NIGHT

We see a yacht decorated for a WEDDING RECEPTION, lit up,
fancily dressed people dancing on the UPPER DECK.

A taxi speeds up and Jane hops out. She spots the boat. The
CREW is folding up the gangplank.

JANE
Wait!

She races down the dock, but they don't hear her against the
wedding music. The boat starts to pull away. She could still
make it -- if she was brave enough to jump...

Summoning all her courage, Jane takes a few steps back. And
then sprints towards the departing boat...

SHE LEAPS OFF THE DOCK

...and wildly overshoots the gap...

...she lands on the aft deck with so much momentum that...

...she plows through two tables...

...a row of deck chairs...

...and a potted plant...

before crashing to the deck! It's an incredibly graceless -- and loud -- arrival. She groans, pushing plastic chairs off of her, and tries to climb to her feet.

VOICE

Jane?

Standing, with a chair wrapped around her ankle, Jane looks up to the TOP DECK and sees the ENTIRE WEDDING looking down at her. The music has stopped and it's dead silent. KEVIN looks down at her, stunned.

KEVIN

What...what are you doing here?

Jane inhales. She's never been so scared in her life.

JANE

Kevin...you were right about me. About who I was, about what I needed to do to be happy. Of course, I would've preferred that you just talked to me about those things instead of publishing them in the paper of record, but the truth is...you get me.

She glances, terrified, at all the GUESTS watching on.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

And so here I am, in front of all these...really nice people...following your advice, taking a chance and stepping into the spotlight and trying to tell you how I feel...

(big inhale)

I-I think we have something pretty cool and pretty different and pretty fun, Kevin, and I know you have issues with love and marriage, but I don't care, I just...I want to see where this goes.

Jane stands there, her heart on the table. Everyone at the wedding TURNS TO KEVIN, well...? Kevin stands there, speechless. Anxious silence. The GUY next to him hisses:

GUY NEXT TO KEVIN

Say something, dude.

Looking at Jane, Kevin starts towards the stairs. He reaches them and

RACES DOWN TO THE LOWER DECK

He stops ten yards from her. And smiles. And says, simply:

KEVIN

I love you.

Jane grins and runs to him. He runs to her, and catches her when she leaps into his arms. They kiss passionately.

All the guests exhale, WHEW, relieved. The MUSIC resumes and they get back to the wedding at hand...

Jane and Kevin continue kissing as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT -- WEEKS LATER

Kevin and Jane hang out in her apartment. A plate of hors d'oeuvres sit on the table. There's a knock on the door. Jane opens it to find TESS, looking less put-together than usual, more natural. They hug warmly.

JANE

Thanks for coming, bee-atch!

TESS

You think I'd miss my sister's first produced segment?!

JANE

How are you?

TESS

Great. I had a big meeting with Dad today. He's going to let me renovate the entire store and head his new interior decorating department!

JANE

What?

TESS

Well, I'll also be the only employee -- but it's a start!!!

JANE

That's amazing!!

Jane gives her a big hug. The doorbell rings again. Jane opens it to find Nancy there holding a bottle of champagne. Jane and Tess squeal. Nancy hugs both of them.

NANCY

Hey, am I late -- did it start yet?

Kevin, on the sofa, calls out to them.

KEVIN

Hurry up! It's starting now!

Jane and Tess hop onto the couch, with Kevin in the middle. Then, 7 Days comes on the TV.

TESS

Oh my God, oh my God!!!

Off of them all excitedly watching the television, we

DISSOLVE TO:

A PICTURESQUE BEACH -- ONE YEAR LATER

It's a wedding. On the beach, casual.

JANE (V.O.)

"The bride and groom met over a year ago at a wedding. And then at another wedding."

The bride and groom are none other than Jane and Kevin. They stand together as a photographer bustles about, trying to arrange the traditional "wedding party" shot.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"As veterans of over 140 weddings between them, they had several stipulations for their own: No themes. No cake was smushed in anyone's face. And neither Y, nor M, nor C, nor A was ever to be uttered in sequence."

Looking exasperated, Tess hurries two glasses of champagne across the sand. She's not used to fetching drinks.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"The bride's sister, Tess, expertly performed the duties of maid of honor, never once believing that this was, in fact, her rookie bridesmaid experience."

Tess furiously hands Kevin and Jane their champagne. Jane just smiles and pats her arm, thank you, baby. Thank you.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"The groom asked his best friend Dave to serve as his sole attendant."

Standing next to Kevin is Dave, looking sharp in his tux.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 "The bride, on the other hand..."

PULL BACK to see Tess standing next to Jane... And then Shari... And Suzanne... And Dawn....

JANE (CONT'D)
 "...asked her 27 closest friends."

PULL BACK WIDER AND WIDER until we see all 27 brides-turned-bridesmaids standing in a row all the way down the beach, wearing matching, tasteful dresses, and laughing hard.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 "It was, in the words of the bride,
payback time."

A photographer finally gets them all in the impossibly wide shot and starts snapping away.

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 "The bride was radiant in white, and at no point suggested to anyone that they might one day shorten their dress and use it again later..."

INT. OCEANSIDE WEDDING HALL -- THAT NIGHT

The wedding has moved inside, and everyone's on the dance floor, including George, who's dancing with a tall, beautiful, earthy-looking woman, and, more notably, Hal and Maureen. The song playing is, of course, "Bennie and the Jets." We don't see Jane and Kevin.

JANE (V.O.)
 "...but the happiest person of all was the groom, who finally realized why, in this day and age, people still enter into this over-hyped, statistically unlikely, horribly optimistic arrangement called marriage. And his reason..."

Kevin and Jane sail into frame in slow motion.

JANE (V.O.)(CONT'D)
 "...was named Jane."

They dance as if it was the most romantic song in the world. We watch a moment and then...

FREEZE the picture. It turns into grainy black and white. We pull out to reveal...

...it's from the VOWS page of the New York Times.

EXT. BEACH -- THE NEXT DAY

Jane and Kevin relax on the beach the next day, sipping mai tai's. Jane finishes reading the column.

JANE

"...Written by Kevin Doyle. This is Mr. Doyle's last column for Vows. He will now be covering national news for our sister paper, the Worcester Telegram & Gazette."

She grins, closes the paper.

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Saved your best column for last.

They clink glasses. Kiss gently. An intimate silence. Then:

JANE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Let's read it again!

And, off of their laughter, we

FADE OUT.